NORTH KOREAN CIVIL-MILITARY TRENDS: MILITARY-FIRST POLITICS TO A POINT

Ken E. Gause

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FOREWORD

Civil-military relations is one of the most challenging dimensions to deal with regarding North Korea. It is a topic that is difficult—if not impossible—to quantify with any real precision. Yet few subjects are more crucial to understanding that country. After all, since 1998, Pyongyang's foremost policy has been declared as "military-first." While experts debate the precise meaning and significance of this policy, considerable consensus exists that it gives the leading role to the Korean People's Army (KPA)—as all services of the armed forces of North Korea collectively are known. Hence, military leaders in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are very powerful and influential figures. Who are they? What kind of power and influence do these leaders wield, and how do they exert it? How do KPA leaders interact with dictator Kim Jong Il and their civilian counterparts? Mr. Ken Gause sets out to answer these questions in this monograph.

It is the third in a special series entitled "Demystifying North Korea." These monographs constitute the first phase of a major project being conducted by the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) under the direction of Dr. Andrew Scobell. The earlier monographs, both written by Dr. Scobell, are *North Korea's Strategic Intentions* (July 2005) and *Kim Jong Il and North Korea: The Leader and the System* (March 2006). SSI is pleased to publish this very important series.

DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
Strategic Studies Institute

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

KEN E. GAUSE is the Director of the Foreign Leadership Studies Program of the Center for Strategic Studies, CNA Corporation, in Alexandria, VA. He is the author of numerous articles and book chapters on the North Korean leadership, including "The North Korean Leadership: System Dynamics and Fault Lines," in Kongdan Oh Hassig, *et. al.*, *North Korean Policy Elites* (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, 2004); and "Sino-North Korean Military Relations: Comrades-in-Arms Forever?" *China Military Digest* (London: Janes Publications, April/May 2004).

SUMMARY

Unlike the study of other authoritarian regimes, first the Soviet Union and more recently China, which have given rise to a cottage industry of analysis on all aspects of things military, the same cannot be said of the Korean People's Army (KPA), the armed forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In the small world of Pyongyang watchers, articles and books devoted to the KPA are few and in most cases deal with the armed forces themselves (order of battle) rather than the high command that oversees the machinery.

This monograph examines the role of the KPA within the power structure of North Korea. The author describes the landscape of military and security institutions that ensure the regime's security and the perpetuation of the Kim dynasty. He also highlights the influential power brokers, both civilian and military, and describes how they fit into the leadership structure. Finally, he considers the role of the KPA in regime politics, especially as it relates to the upcoming succession and economic reform.

An understanding of the North Korean leadership does not mean only recognizing the personalities who occupy the top political positions within the regime. In his landmark book, *Shield of the Great Leader*, Joseph Bermudez noted that over its 50-year history, the DPRK has developed into one of the most militarized countries in the world, with the KPA existing alongside the Korean Worker's Party (KWP) as the two cornerstones of the regime. During this time, the role of the high command and its ties to the leadership and decisionmaking have changed.

The KPA was founded on February 8, 1948, approximately 7 months before the founding of the DPRK. As Kim Il Sung struggled to consolidate his power over the regime, his old comrades-in-arms, with whom he had fought against the Japanese, helped him purge the factional groupings and their leaders. After he had secured his power, Kim Il Sung relied on the KWP to rule the country. The high command played its role within the decisionmaking bodies of the state, but it paid its loyalty to the party and the Great Leader.

When Kim Jong Il succeeded his father as the supreme leader in 1994, he faced a regime divided among numerous factions, many of

which did not owe allegiance to him. As a consequence, he embarked on a campaign of reshuffling briefs, purging the more dangerous elements of the regime, and making way for a new generation of leaders who would coexist and then slowly replace their elders. At the same time, he began to move more authority from the KWP and to place it within the purview of the military. This transformation of authority culminated in 1998 at the 10th Supreme People's Assembly, when the National Defense Commission eclipsed the Politburo as the supreme national decisionmaking body. In the years since, the term "military-first politics" (*son'gun chongch'i*) has been used to signify the privileged status the KPA holds throughout North Korean society and to stress that the regime's sovereignty rests upon the military's shoulders.

This monograph tracks the rise of the military inside the North Korean leadership and presents the backgrounds of key figures within the high command and the formal and informal connections that bind this institution to Kim Jong Il. As the first generation has passed from the scene, Kim has consolidated his grip on the military slowly by promoting loyalists to key positions throughout the apparatus. He has promoted more than 1,200 general-grade officers on 15 occasions prior to April 2006. This has not only secured Kim's power, many have argued it has enhanced the military's influence over him, especially when compared with its influence over his father.

The question facing many North Korea watchers is the extent to which the military figures into decisionmaking. This report argues that, while the military has grown in stature and influence over the last decade, it remains one of many players within the North Korean policymaking process. The lines of authority and information within the regime are complex, consisting of formal and informal channels. The military has numerous avenues into the Kim apparatus, and on many issues have what amounts to a veto authority. This apparently was made clear recently by North Korea's decision to cancel the test run for train services between North and South. But this does not mean that the military is the primary decisionmaker; that role still belongs to Kim Jong Il, even though he must weigh seriously military thinking on issues that reach far beyond the national security realm.

This monograph also argues that the KPA is not a monolith, but is made up of a range of views, some more hard line than others. Some senior figures within the high command are rumored to have pushed for reforms both internally and in terms of foreign policy, while many younger field commanders are believed to hold some of the hardest of the hard line views. But one area where there seems to be wide agreement throughout the military leadership is the need to fund the armed forces adequately because it is on their back that the nation's security depends.

In the next few years, the North Korean leadership will face the implications of the "military-first policy" in very stark terms. If Kim Jong Il is to begin to bring the civilian economy out of the dark ages, the military will have to share some of the burden. But whether the high command will be willing to trade some of its "weapons for ploughshares" is not certain, given the current tensions on the peninsula. In the mix of what is already a contentious argument over guns versus butter is an unfolding succession struggle as Kim seeks to name his heir apparent. As in any totalitarian regime, the succession issue is huge and impacts decisionmaking across the board.

There is a note of caution when reading this report. The subject matter deals with information that is unfolding and will continue to shift in the coming months and years. The author has made every effort to validate through numerous sources the information contained on the various personalities, but in some cases it is still opaque. The reason for this is simple. Information on North Korean leadership issues is a closely held secret inside the Hermit Kingdom. The actions and activity of individual leaders are more often rumor than subject to check and verification.

NORTH KOREAN CIVIL-MILITARY TRENDS: MILITARY-FIRST POLITICS TO A POINT

INTRODUCTION

On February 8, 2005, at the conclusion of an unprecedented military-party policy meeting, the North Korean high command pledged its loyalty to Kim Jong Il, praising his leadership and the military-first policy. Two days later, North Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the country's possession of nuclear weapons and indefinite suspension of participation in the six-party talks. This declaration signaled a shift in North Korea's public diplomacy, which had until then been based on innuendo and obfuscation. Since the declaration, North Korea has returned to and again left the six-party talks, but has hinted at its willingness to forgo a nuclear capability if certain conditions are met.

It would be easy to dismiss North Korea's actions as just a continuation of its bellicose and confounding foreign policy strategy, which it trots out from time to time when it either feels cornered by the international community or wants increased levels of international aid. However, it should be cautioned that this strategy does not exist in a vacuum. These events come in a period of dramatic change within the North Korean ruling structure, both in terms of personnel and organization. Some of the more dramatic include:

- Rumors of an on-going succession struggle to name an heir apparent to Kim Jong Il;
- At least two major explosions in North Korea over the last 2 years, neither of which has been adequately explained;
- The death of Ko Young Hui, Kim Jong Il's wife/mistress;
- The alleged arrest of Chang Song Taek, considered by many to be the number two man in Pyongyang; and,
- A reorganization of key power institutions, which have oversight for the military and security apparatus.

For many Pyongyang watchers, this movement within the elite suggests a major struggle for power is taking place within the

Hermit Kingdom. Others believe it signals not so much a struggle for power as a realignment of control by Kim Jong Il to clear the way for significant changes in policy. Regardless of the reason, Kim Jong Il's ability to garner the support of the leadership, especially the military's, will be critical in dictating the future character of the regime.

The context through which leadership is implemented in the country is just as important as whether or not a struggle for power is ongoing inside North Korea. Little doubt exists that the environment in which politics is conducted inside the regime is evolving. When Kim Il Sung was alive, the Korean Workers Party (KWP) was the central organizing force for ruling the country. Under Kim Jong Il, the party has been replaced by the military (the Korean People's Army [KPA]) in this role. Under the banner of "military-first politics," the adulation that was once reserved for the party has shifted to the military, and its presence can be felt in every aspect of political and social life. The profound nature of this shift is made clear in the 1998 amendments to the constitution, which Kim used to place his stamp on the regime, where the state presidency was for all intents abolished and all real power shifted to the National Defense Commission (NDC). As such, if Kim were to die suddenly, the party or the state would not assume authority; the military establishment would.

The character of the KPA high command has changed in the decade since Kim Jong Il came to power. While members of the first (partisan) generation still hold posts of power, the day-to-day management of the military has begun to shift to the second and third generations. The era of a single senior military figure tied closely to the party and the Great Leader has been replaced by a system in which control within the KPA is more dispersed, and many channels lead back to Kim. In this way, Kim Jong Il has been able to secure his control over the military, a goal that is ultimately at the heart of "military-first politics."

Kim Jong Il's goal of consolidating his power has constrained North Korea's ability to carry out other policies, especially if they involve reform. While the military establishment is not a monolith and represents a wide range of policy views, as a whole it is far less

amenable to change than other parts of the system (including the KWP). The high command fears such change could lead to civil unrest and disorder. In addition, a move toward greater economic liberalization, for example, could shift budgetary priorities away from the military toward the civilian sector, something the military leadership does not see in its best interest. Since 2005, indications are this "guns versus butter" argument has manifested itself in an apparent struggle between the KPA and KWP for control over the direction of the country.

The succession struggle is a further complication undermining the system's ability to conduct policy. Over the last few years, this struggle has been underway as Kim Jong Il endeavors to name an heir apparent. As various individuals and institutions line up in support of particular successors, the result could be a galvanizing effect whereby factions are formed from leaders with similar vested interests. Whether or not the KPA supports Kim's efforts is not yet clear. That the high command has been reshuffled and its chains of command have been altered suggest that it may be a source of concern.

This monograph examines the role of the KPA within the power structure of North Korea. The author describes the landscape of military and security institutions that ensure the security of the regime and the perpetuation of the Kim dynasty. He also highlights the influential power brokers, both civilian and military, and describes how they fit into the leadership structure. Finally, he considers the role of the KPA in regime politics, especially as it relates to the upcoming succession and economic reform.

NORTH KOREAN POWER STRUCTURE

The North Korean political superstructure is a complicated mosaic of shifting and interlocking, but relatively, simple institutions, resting upon the entrenched foundation of one-man dictatorship, in which all powers are delegated from Kim Jong Il. Both the party and state apparatuses, in terms of both their relationships with one another and the relationships of various organs within the party and state structures to each other, are creations of Kim Jong Il (and

his father). They are designed not to limit the *Suryong*'s (supreme leader's) power, but to limit that of his subordinates and potential rivals and to facilitate the consolidation of his own authority. Conflicting lines of authority between party and state provide an ad hoc system of crosschecks and balances. Although various party and state institutions are invested with certain well-defined formal functions and powers, identifiable lines of legal responsibility, and specified procedures, the actual process is different.[1] The formal legal framework often is violated by a body of secret and unpublished circulars, regulations, decrees, orders, resolutions, and so on, which supercede published norms.

As a system, power and influence within the North Korean regime exist within four loci simultaneously:

- The Party apparatus;
- The military and security apparatus;
- A family-based patronage system; and,
- Among three generations of leaders.

Furthermore, like most authoritarian regimes, North Korea has both a formal political structure and an informal one. Traditionally, the formal structure of power has been composed of the party apparatus and state apparatus. Since the late 1990s, the profile of the military in the formal power structure seems to have risen.

Key members of the formal leadership include:

- Kim Yong Nam: Presidium President of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) and titular head of state;
- Pak Pong Chu: Premier; and,
- Yi Yong Mu: Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission (NDC).

The informal leadership controls the real power in North Korea, however, by virtue of its proximity to Kim and its control over the flow of information, and it has been subject to less change. This Praetorian Guard is linked to the Great Leader either by blood ties or by bonds developed over decades of service to the Kim family. Kim

relies on this group of loyal servants to enforce order throughout the system and to provide advice in the decisionmaking process.

Key members of the informal leadership include:

- Members of Kim Jong Il's family, but their status is shifting due to the succession;
- Kye Ung Tae: Party secretary for security;
- Kang Sang Chun: Chief of Kim Jong Il's personal secretariat;[2] and,
- Kang Sok Chu: First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Evolving Leadership Dynamics in the Kim Jong Il Era.

Kim Jong Il's leadership style and the decisionmaking process in North Korea do not fit the classical totalitarian model. Although no doubt exists that it is "a system within a system"—a key characteristic of Stalinist regimes—the linkages are not as well-defined, and the flow of power and information through the system is less institutionalized and more often a function of personal connections. Kim Jong Il undoubtedly has the final word in the decisionmaking chain, but he appears to allow debate and influence to flow up through the system. This has been illustrated on a number of occasions when he apparently changed a decision after the military weighed in.

He promotes a system whereby he is the focal point for many separate chains of command. This, in turn, leads to a scramble for influence at the next echelon of power. This hub-and-spoke approach to regime management has created a system of checks and balances with regard to the decisionmaking process. The interplay between the high command and elements within the foreign policy apparatus illustrates turf battles as a feature of the North Korean decisionmaking process. Although Kim tries to extend his reach throughout the system, there is some evidence that he encourages the system to analyze and vet issues and narrow options before passing policy initiatives up to him. This suggests that any attempt to understand how North Korea will react to a particular initiative or stimulus must look beyond the Great Leader.

Kim Jong Il's legitimacy is intertwined with the philosophy of "self-sufficiency" (the *juche* philosophy). As is the case for many

ideologically driven regimes, it is incumbent on the North Korean leadership to reconcile any new policy initiatives with the central tenets of the existing ideology. Kim Jong Il has some latitude to stretch ideology to fit diverse situations, but he must be careful not to get ahead of the apparatus, which sees "*juche* thought" as a key pillar to its existence—the pillar that rationalizes its relationship to the Great Leader.

MILITARY-FIRST AND REGIME POLITICS IN 2005

Many have speculated that the military-first policy (*son'gun chongch'i*) has meant the elevation of the military in the control and overall decisionmaking process of the regime.[3] What should be understood is that this reorganization had more to do with the restructuring of power and influence than it did with the North Korean decisionmaking model. Kim has realized that his ability to rule is linked firmly to the support of the military and security agencies. Placing the NDC at the pinnacle of the leadership structure accommodated the importance of this pillar of support.

By elevating the status of the NDC in 1998, Kim Jong Il harnessed the expertise within the senior leadership critical to national security decisionmaking. Under Kim Il Sung, control of the armed forces was exercised through the Korean Workers' Party (KWP). The information flow was directly through the chain of command: the Korean People's Army (KPA) to Central Military Committee (CMC) to Kim. With the restructuring of the regime in 1998, Kim Jong Il has engineered a more direct relationship with the military. Information travels through various channels from the KPA and security forces directly to Kim's office via his personal secretariat. This gives the high command several avenues through which to gauge Kim's thinking on a particular issue, and then exert influence.

The new NDC provides Kim with a forum for discussion to inform him of both the internal and external issues involved in complex diplomatic decisions. By bringing together the most powerful elements within the national security establishment and giving it official sanction, Kim's departures from the policy lines set down by his father have some political cover.

Despite its elevated status, the military's role in decisionmaking does not appear to be one of leader on policy initiatives, but one of counsel. This is reinforced by how major policy initiatives are released to the public. For example, the February 10, 2005, declaration on nuclear weapons was made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, not the NDC, suggesting that even on important strategic decisions, the decisionmaking process is not relegated to the military, but is more collegial. In this case, senior foreign policy and military officials were included in the deliberation process. Their inputs were transmitted to Kim's secretariat, which took the lead on incorporating his adjustments.

Shifting Influence: KWP vs. KPA.

One of the hallmarks of the Kim Jong Il era has been the evolution of power away from the KWP and toward the KPA.[4] In the wake of the revision of the constitution in 1998, making the NDC the highest state body, there has been a dramatic reshuffling of the official leadership rankings.[5] Members of the NDC have begun to overtake Politburo and Secretariat members. A clear example of this is Vice Marshal (VMAR) Cho Myong Nok, the Director of the General Political Bureau and first vice chairman of the NDC. On O Chin U's funeral list in 1995, he was ranked 95th. By 2001 at the 10th SPA, he had risen to third. (See Figure 1.)

Another indication of the military's growing influence is the shifting composition of those who accompany Kim on his guidance inspections. Because of Kim's reluctance to preside over meetings and due to his preference for behind-the-scenes national administration, the role of the Politburo and other traditional centers of power have deteriorated, while the positions of those who accompany Kim on his on-the-spot guidance tours (such as members of the Secretariat and military) have been enhanced. Figure 2 provides an overview of Kim's public activities (mostly guidance inspections) since 1998.[6] In 2005, Kim made 124 appearances, including 59 inspections of military facilities, 21 inspections of economic facilities, and 21 diplomatic appearances.[7]

KIS Funeral 1994	O Chin U Funeral 1995	Session 1 10th SPA 1998	55th KWP Anniversary 2000	Session 4 10th SPA 2001	Session 5 10th SPA 2002	Yon Hyong Muk Funeral 2005
1. KCI, Great Leader, NDC Chairman, KWP Gen Sec (KIS's eldest son)	KCI	KCI	KCI	KCI	KCI (moderate)	KCI
2. **O Chin U**, MPAF	Kang Song San	Kim Yong Nam, President, SPA	Kim Yong Nam	Kim Yong Nam	Kim Yong Nam (conservative)	**Cho Myong Nok** (chairman, funeral committee)
3. Kang Song San, PM/Politburo Member (KIS's cousin)	Yi Chong Ok	Hong Song Nam, PM	Pak Song Chol (moderate)	**Cho Myong Nok**	**Cho Myong Nok** (conservative, but open to limited reform)	Kim Yong Nam
4. Yi Chong Ok, VP/ Politburo Member	Pak Song Chol	Yi Chong Ok	Kim Yong Chu (conservative)	Hong Song Nam	Hong Song Nam (moderate)	Pak Pong Chu, PM
5. Pak Song Chol, VP/ Politburo Member (Husband of KIS's cousin)	Kim Yong Chu	Pak Song Chol	Hong Song Nam	Kim Yong Chun	**Kim Yong Chun** (conservative, but open to limited reform)	**Kim Yong Chun**
6. Kim Yong Chu, VP/ Politburo Member (KIS's younger brother)	Kim Yong Nam	Kim Yong Chu	Kim Yong Chun	**Kim Il Chol**	**Kim Il Chol** (conservative)	**Kim Il Chol**
7. Kim Pyong Sik, VP	**Choe Kwang**	**Cho Myong Nok,** Dir., GPD, CMC member, 1st Vice Chair, NDC	**Kim Il Chol**, MPAF	**Chon Pyong Ho**	**Yi Ul Sol** (conservative)	**Chon Pyong Ho**
8. Kim Yong Nam, Nam, MFA/ Politburo Member	Kye Ung Tae	**Yi Ul Sol**, Cdr, Guard Command, CMC/NDC	**Yi Ul Sol**	Yon Hyong Muk (reformer)	**Paek Hak Nim** (conservative)	**Yi Yong Mu**
9. **Choe Kwang**, Chief GS/Politburo Member	**Chon Pyong Ho**	**Kim Il Chol**, Vice MPAF, CMC member, Vice Chair, ND	**Paek Hak Nim**, Min of People's Security, CMC/NDC	**Yi Ul Sol**	**Chon Pyong Ho** (conservative)	Choe Tae Pok
10. Kye Ung Tae, Politburo Member/ Secretary	Han Song Yong	Yi Yong Mu, CMC member, Vice Chair, NDC	Yang Hyong Sop	Yang Hyong Sop	Han Song Yong (moderate)	Yang Hyong Sop
11. **Chon Pyong Ho**, Politburo Member/ KWP Secretary (munitions), NDC Member	So Yun Sok	Kye Ung Tae	Han Song Yong	**Paek Hak Nim**	Kye Ung Tae (conservative)	Choe Yong Nim
12. Han Song Yong, Politburo Member/	Kim Chol Man	**Chon Pyong Ho**	Kye Ung Tae	**Yi Yong Mu**, Vice Chair of KWP Secretary NDC (husband of KIS's niece)	**Kim Chol Man**	Kim Ki Nam
13. So Yun Sok, Politburo member	Choe Tae Pok	Han Song Yong	**Kim Chol Man**	**Kim Chol Man**	**Yi Yong Mu**	Kim Chung Rin, KWP Secretary (mass orgs)
14. Kim Chol Man, Politburo member (C)	Choe Yong Nim	**Kim Yong Chun**, Chief of GS, NDC member	Choe Tae Pok	Kye Ung Tae	Yang Hyong Sop	Hong Song Nam
15. Choe Tae Pok, Politburo Member (C)/KWP Secretary (international affairs)	Hong Song Nam	Yang Hyong Sop, VP SPA	Yang Hyong Sop	Han Song Yong	Choe Yong Nim	Kwak Pom Gi, Vice PM
16. Choe Yong Nim, Min. Metallurgy Ind., Vice PM, Politburo Member (C)	Yang Hyong Sop, Chairman, SPA, Politburo Member (C) (Son-in-law, KIS's paternal aunt)	Choe Tae Pok, Chairman, SPA	Choe Yong Nim, Prosecutor General, Politburo Member ©	Choe Yong Nim	Kim Yun Hyok	Ro Tu Chol, Vice PM

Figure 1. Formal North Korean Leadership Ranking (continued).

17. Hong Song Nam, Vice PM/Politburo Member (C)	Hong Sok Hyong, Chair State Planning Committee, Politburo Member (C)	**Kim Chol Man**, NDC Member	Kim Kuk Tae, KWP Secretary, Dir Cadre Dept. (conservative)	Kim Yun Hyok, SPA	Kim Yong Tae	Chon Sung Hun, Vice PM
18. Kang Hui Won, Vice PM/Politburo Member (C) Chairman	Yon Hyon Muk, Politburo member (C) (Kim family member)	Yon Hyon Muk	Kim Chun Nin, KWP Secretary	Yu Mi Yong, SPA Standing Committee member	Yu Mi Yong, VP SPA	Kim Yong Dae, Chairman SDP RYu Mi Yong, CCP **Paek Se Pong** (NDC(?)

Figure 1. Formal North Korean Leadership Ranking (concluded).[8]

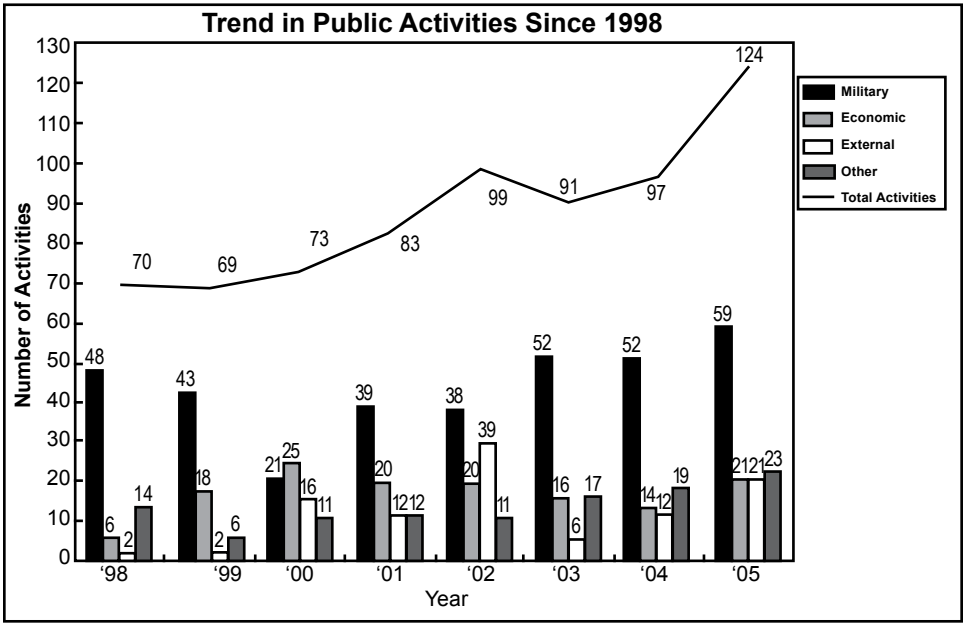

Figure 2. Overview of Kim Jong Il's Public Activities.

In 2003, military officers replaced KWP officials as the most represented group within Kim's entourage. In 2004 and 2005, more than half of his public activities were related to the military, through which he checked the military's battle preparedness and manifested military-first politics and his determination to safeguard the system. A total of 42 officials accompanied Kim Jong Il to his public activities in 2005; four more than accompanied him in 2004.

- Military officers made up the largest share of entourage members, who included Kim Yong Chun (18 times), Kim Il

Chol (21 times), Yi Myong Su (43 times), Hyon Chol Hae (43 times), and Pak Chae Kyong (44 times).

- Among party officials, Kim Ki Nam (from 16 times to 31), Kim Kuk Tae (from 9 to 18), and Choe Tae Pok (from two to 21) accompanied him more often than in the past. Yi Chae Il, a first deputy director (from 3 times to 25), and Hwang Pyong So, a deputy director (from zero to 33 times), emerged as close aides to Kim Jong Il within the party.
- Among Cabinet officials, Kang Sok Chu (from 8 times to 20) accompanied him more frequently than before with regard to external issues. The standing of Premier Pak Pong Chu (from five to 29) seemed to have increased significantly in connection with the economy.

The number of officials who accompanied Kim more than 10 times increased from 6 in 2004 to 14 in 2005. The number of those who accompanied him more than 10 times varies: 12 officials in 2001, 12 in 2002, 11 in 2003, 6 in 2004, and 14 in 2005. (See Figure 3.)

KIM JONG IL AND THE NORTH KOREAN MILITARY

Kim Jong Il's relationship with the KPA has been unique in the variety of power relationships within North Korea. The KPA is by far the strongest force in North Korea, and is the only group that can truly challenge Kim's rule. North Korea is the most militarized country in the world, with 1.1 million troops out of a total population of 23 million (almost 5 percent). The military officially consumes 15.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), and unofficially more than 30 percent, according to estimates by the South Korean Defense Ministry.[10] Therefore, whoever rules North Korea must control the military.

Unlike his father, who was a guerrilla leader against the Japanese in Manchuria in the 1930s and 1940s, Kim Jong Il has no military background. In a system that puts a premium on military service, this was interpreted as a critical weakness that would potentially undermine his credibility to become supreme leader. Kim Il Sung tried to overcome this deficiency by incrementally increasing his

	Name	Title	Frequency
2003			
1	Hyon Chol Hae	Director, Organization Bureau, General Political Department	36
2	Pak Chae Kyong	Director, Propaganda Bureau, General Political Department	34
3	Yi Myong Su	Director, Operations Department, General Staff	31
4	Kim Yong Chun	Chief of general staff	22
5	Kim Ki Nam	WPK secretary	18
6	Yi Yong Chol	First deputy director, Organization and Guidance Department	17
7	Kim Kuk Tae	WPK secretary	16
8	Kim Yong Sun	WPK secretary	15
9	Choe Chun Hwang	First deputy director, Propaganda and Agitation Department	14
10	Kim Il Chol	People's armed forces minister	12
11	Chang Song Taek	First deputy director, Organization and Guidance Department	12
2004			
1	Hyon Chol Hae	Director, Organization Bureau, General Political Department	55
2	Pak Chae Kyong	Director, Propaganda Bureau, General Political Department	51
3	Yi Myong Su	Director, Operations Department, General Staff	47
4	Yi Yong Chol	First deputy director, Organization and Guidance Department	35
5	Kim Yong Chun	Chief of general staff	21
6	Kim Ki Nam	WPK secretary	15
2005			
1	Pak Chae Kyong	Director, Propaganda Bureau, General Political Department	44
2	Yi Myong Su	Director, Operations Department, General Staff	43
3	Hyon Chol Hae	Deputy director, General Political Department	43
4	Hwang Pyong So	WPK deputy director, Military Department	33
5	Kim Ki Nam	WPK secretary	31
6	Pak Pong Chu	Cabinet premier	29
7	Yi Chae Il	First deputy director, Propaganda and Agitation Department	25
8	Kim Il Chol	People's armed forces minister	21
9	Choe Tae Pok	WPK secretary	21
10	Yi Yong Chol	First deputy director, Organization and Guidance Department	21
11	Kang Sok Chu	First vice foreign minister	20
12	Kim Yong Chun	Chief of general staff	18
13	Kim Kuk Tae	WPK secretary	18
14	Kim Yang Kon	Councilor, National Defense Commission	10

Figure 3. Status of Officials Who Accompanied Chairman Kim Jong Il (More Than 10 Times) to His Public Activities.[9]

son's institutional control over the military. In 1980, Kim Jong Il was appointed first vice chairman of the CMC, the KWP's channel to the leadership for defense affairs. This position allowed him to make major policy statements on a wide variety of issues affecting the military. In 1990, at the first meeting of the 9th SPA, he was appointed first vice chairman of the NDC, the state institution for overseeing defense policy implementation. Over the next 3 years, he was made Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces (December 1991), promoted to the rank of marshal (August 1992), and appointed chairman of the NDC (April 1993).[11]

During this period, Kim Jong Il used his institutional control over the armed forces to develop several conduits through which he could keep abreast of military affairs. He apparently received daily reports from the General Staff, the General Political Bureau, and the Political Security Department. Within this three-channel system, the General Political Bureau kept him informed on the activities of all the general grade officers of the KPA. In addition, the Central Committee's Organization and Guidance Department, which he still controls, maintained surveillance over the General Political Bureau, thus ensuring that the Dear Leader was the sole beneficiary of the most comprehensive information on KPA personnel.

When Kim Jong Il assumed power in 1994, a new mission was assigned to the KPA: "Safeguard the command post of socialist revolution led by supreme leader Kim Jong Il." Thus, the KPA was required to become the primary guardian of the new leader. This new responsibility was enforced through a number of carrots and sticks.[12]

Carrots.

- Increases in defense budgets despite ever-deepening economic crisis;
- Material benefits and privileges to the high command; and,
- Promotions among the senior officer corps.

Sticks.

- Overlapping command structures to keep the military in check;
- Institutionalizing checks and balance mechanisms within the army;
- Increased surveillance of the military by the security services;
- Divide-and-control senior military commanders; and,
- Intensifying ideological indoctrination of the army.

Beginning in 1997, Kim began to formalize the military's enhanced status under the slogan that "the party is the very army, and the army is the very party."[13] Furthermore, it was announced, "the army is the people, the state, and the party."[14] Against this backdrop, the KPA has made substantial inroads into the party and

state sectors. The number of active generals within the key party and state organs—Politburo, Central Committee, and the SPA—has increased significantly.[15] Since the formal announcement of the Kim Jong Il regime at the 10th SPA in 1998, the military appears to have achieved parity, or even surpassed, with the KWP in terms of influence.[16]

Promotions within the KPA High Command.

On assuming the post of supreme commander of the KPA in December 1991, Kim Jong Il stepped up his drive to control the KPA by assigning his men to key military posts. By April 2006, Kim, acting as the supreme KPA commander, had granted promotions to about 1,200 general-grade officers on 15 occasions, such as the birthdays of the Kim father and son (April 15 and February 16), KPA Founding Day (April 25), Armistice Agreement Day (July 27), North Korea's Foundation Day (September 9), and the KWP's Foundation Day (October 10). Also through frequent personnel reshuffles, he posted loyal officers to important duties. (See Figure 4.)

Changing of the Generational Guard.

Another strategy Kim Jong Il has employed to secure control over the KPA has been his treatment of the generation question in the high command. When Kim came to power, the military leadership could be divided into three groups, whose priorities and aspirations did not always match.[17] The first (so-called "partisan") generation, was composed of those military leaders who fought along side Kim Il Sung in the war against Japan. (See Figure 5.) While this group was fiercely loyal to the Great Leader, the state of its relationship with Kim Jong Il was far from clear. Three marshals whose support was vital to Kim's survival led this generation: MAR O Chin U (Minister of the People's Armed Forces), VMAR Choe Kwang (Chief of the General Staff), and VMAR Kim Kwang Chin (Vice Minister of the PAF). The second group was made up of generals in their 60s who occupied most of the posts just below the leadership level. The final group, the third generation, was made up of thousands of field officers, many of whom had studied abroad.

Date	Occasion	Supreme Commander Orders	National Defense Commission (and CMC) Decisions
April 1992 (664 promotions)	80th birthday of President Kim Il Sung	664 promotions with Cho Myong Nok., Kim Il Chol, and 14 others promoted from colonel general to general	
July 1993 (99 promotions)	40th anniversary of the Armistice Agreement	Chae Chun Kil, Yi Su Hyon, and 12 others promoted from major general to lieutenant general; Yom Tae Kyong, Kim Yong Su, and 83 others promoted from senior colonel to major general	
October 1995 (14 and five promotions, respectively)	50th anniversary of the Workers' Party of Korea	Kim Ha Kyu, Hyon Chol Hae, and Kim Pyong Yul promoted from colonel general to general; Chon Ki Yon, Yi Myong Su, and three others promoted from lieutenant general to colonel general; Kim Hyong Yong, Kim Tong Kyun, Choe Pu Il, and Yi Chu Ul promoted from major general to lieutenant general; Kang Pyo Yong and Yi Kyong Hwa promoted from senior colonel to major general	Choe Kwang and Yi Ul Sol promoted from vice marshal to marshal; Cho Myong Nok, Yi Ha Il, and KimYong Chun promoted from general to vice marshal
February 1997 (six promotions)	55th birthday of General Secretary Kim Jong Il	Kim Kyok Sik, Chu Song Sang, Kim Song Syu, and Pak Chae Kyong promoted from colonel general to general; Pak Yong Ha and Yi Chang Hwan promoted from major general to lieutenant general	
April 1997 (123 promotions)	85th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Kim Il Chol, Chon Chae Son, Yi Ki So, and Yi Chong San promoted from general to vice marshal; Chong Chang Yol promoted from colonel general to general; Kim Yong Un, Yi Yong Hwan, and six others promoted from lieutenant general to colonel general; Choe Sang Yo and 36 others promoted from major general to lieutenant general	
April 1998 (22 promotions)	86th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Choe Song Su promoted from lieutenant general to colonel general; Chong Kyong Hong promoted from major general to lieutenant general; Ko Ki Su and 19 others promoted from senior colonel to major general	
September 1998 (two promotions)	50th anniversary of the DPRK		Yi Yong Mu, Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission, and Kim Yong Yon, president of the Mangyongdae Revolutionary School, promoted to vice marshal
April 1999 (79 promotions)	87th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Yi Pyong Sam promoted from lieutenant general to colonel general; Kim Son Chu promoted from major general to lieutenant general; Kim Tong Il and 70 others promoted from senior colonel to major general	

Figure 4. Senior Military Promotions Under Kim Jong Il as Supreme Commander (continued).

April 2000 (44 promotions)	88th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Yi Myong Su promoted from colonel general to general; Yi Chan Pok and Kim Kum Son promoted from lieutenant general to colonel general; Kim Sung Bom and five others promoted to lieutenant general; 35 colonels were promoted to major general.
April 2001 (19 promotions)	89th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Kang Tok Su promoted from lieutenant general to colonel general; Kim Chong Sik and two others promoted from major general to lieutenant general; Yun Yong Kil and 14others promoted from senior colonel to major general
April 2002 (55 promotions)	90th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Chang Song U promoted to vice marshal; Kim Yun Sim, Kim Chong Kak, and Yo Chun Sok were promoted to full general; six lieutenant (two-star) generals to colonel generals, five major (one-star) generals to lieutenant generals and 40 colonels to major generals
July 2003 (24 promotions)	50th anniversary of victory in the great fatherland's liberation war	Pyon In Son, Kim Hyong Yong, Choe Hyong Kwan, Yi Tae Won, Sim Sang Tae, Chi Yong Chun promoted to colonel general; 10 promoted to lieutenant general; and 8 promoted to major general
April 2004 (73 promotions)	92nd birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Pak Won Sik, Yim Sang Ton, Yu Che Hwan, Chon Chang Chin, Kim Hui Yon, Yun Chae Kon, Cha Kyong Il, and Kim Yong Chun promoted to lieutenant general; 65 others promoted to major general
April 2005 (34 promotions)	93rd birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Yom Sung Il, Choe Chung Hwa, and Chon Kwan Sik promoted to lieutenant general; 31 others promoted to major general
April 2006 (37 promotions)	94th birthday anniversary of the late President Kim Il Sung	Yi Pong Chuk, Choe Pu Il promoted to colonel general; Kang Pil Hun, Pae Chang Pok, Kim Chong Ho, Yi Kyong Hwan promoted to lieutenant general; 31 others promoted to major general

Figure 4. Senior Military Promotions Under Kim Jong Il as Supreme Commander (concluded).[18]

Kim's strategy for handling the old guard made it easy for them to follow their inclination to support the new leader. O Chin U was rumored to be very close to the Kim family and was one of the primary supporters of dynastic succession. In an article written in 1975, he pledged that the military would strive to maintain the Kim Il Sung/Kim Jong Il regime and be faithful as the Army of the

Name	Position
MAR Yi Ul Sol	Former Commander, Guard Command
VMAR Paek Hak Nim	Former Minister of Public Security
VMAR Kim Ik Hyon	Former Director, KWP Civil Defense Department
VMAR Choe Myong Nok	Director, General Political Bureau

Figure 5. Key First Generation Military Leaders.

party.[19] With this as a precedent, other generals published articles pledging their loyalty on the subsequent anniversaries of the party and the KPA. In 1993, both Choe Kwang and Kim Kwang Chin made a point of pledging their loyalty to Kim Jong Il in major anniversary speeches.[20]

Kim Jong Il repaid this loyalty by not forcing the old guard to retire, or more drastically, subjecting them to a purge.[21] In fact, when O Chin U died in 1995, Kim left the minister's position vacant for more than 7 months before naming a new minister, Choe Kwang, another member of the old guard. Likewise, although Choe died in February 1997, the post was left vacant until September 1998, when Kim Il Chol was appointed.

Kim's core support within the high command is based within the second generation of revolutionaries. Many of these officers attended the Mangyongdae Revolutionary Institute with Kim, and currently occupy key military posts throughout the establishment. If the regime comes under attack, especially from within the leadership, this faction will be the mainstay of Kim Jong Il's power.[22] But, it should be noted several of these officers are now being retired or removed from critical positions. (See Figure 6.)

Name	Position
VMAR Yi Ha Il	Former Director, KWP Military Department
VMAR Kim Yong Chun	Chief of the General Staff
VMAR Kim Il Chol	Minister of the People's Armed Forces
VMAR Pak Ki So	Former Commander, Pyongyang Defense Command
VMAR Chon Chae Son	Former Commander, 1st KPA Corps
GEN O Kuk Yol	Director, KWP Operations Department
GEN Kim Tu Nam	Chief, Kumsusan Memorial Palace
GEN Hyon Chol Hae	Deputy Director, General Political Bureau
GEN Kim Kyuk Sik	Commander, 2nd KPA Corps

Figure 6. Key Second Generation Military Leaders.

Indications are that Kim also is reaching out to the third generation of military leaders. Currently, these officers are rising within the field commands or exist at the second and third echelons of the central military command structure. The North Korean political leadership (and especially Kim Jong Il) looks on this generation with some concern because it does not have direct links to the revolutionary period. In some quarters, this generation is seen as susceptible to the allure of capitalism. For that reason, special attention has been devoted to inculcating this generation, as well as the fourth generation, with ideological and cultural education. Kim also has begun to promote officers from the third generation to key posts within the high command and establish personal, yet informal, links with others. (See Figure 7.)

Name	Position
VMAR Chang Song U	Director, KWP Civil Defense Department
GEN Pak Chae Kyong	Deputy Director, General Political Bureau
GEN Won Ung Hui	Former Chief, Military Security Command
GEN Kim Myong Kuk	Commander, 108th Mechanized Corps
GEN Kim Ha Kyu	Commander, Artillery Command
COL Gen. Yi Myong Su	Director, General Staff's Operations Bureau
COL Gen. Kim Hyong Yong	Commander, 815th Mechanized Corps

Figure 7. Key Third Generation Military Leaders.

Kim's Military Support System.

In addition to promotions and his treatment of the generation question, Kim has instituted a dedicated support system within the KPA. As mentioned earlier, as part of his hub-and-spoke decisionmaking style, Kim often circumnavigates direct chains of command in order to give himself alternate reservoirs of information.[23] This allows him to access information that may otherwise be denied through formal channels such as the NDC and CMC. It also allows him to keep tabs on the senior leadership. He has done this within the military by forming alliances within such critical KPA institutions as the General Political Bureau and the General Staff.

*Pak Chae Kyong/Yi Mung Su/Hyon Chul Hae***.** Three military leaders who appear to be on the rise because of Kim's patronage are General Pak Chae Kyong, General Yi Myong Su, and General Hyon Chul Hae.

All three reside within the second echelon of the military leadership and appear to have been tapped by Kim as sources of information and intelligence.

General Pak Chae Kyong is a vice director of the General Political Bureau (GPB) and oversees propaganda ideological training for the KPA. He has been given the responsibility for ensuring military loyalty to the Kim dynasty. He also is personally responsible for oversight of programs to further the personality cult of Kim Jong Il and for ideological education in the military. Apparently, Pak has been given permission to report directly to Kim on a variety of issues, bypassing the GPB chain of command.[24]

General Yi Myong Su is the director of the General Staff's Operations Bureau, which is responsible for all operational aspects of the KPA, including the general operational planning for the Air Force, Navy, Workers'-Peasants' Red Guard, and Paramilitary Training units.[25] A close associate of Chang Song U,[26] Yi has a direct channel to Kim Jong Il.[27] In cases of emergency, Kim can bypass the chain of command and communicate directly with the Operations Bureau.

General Hyon Chol Hae, the former General Political Directorate (GPD) vice director for organization, was appointed to the new post of vice director of administration,[28] which is responsible for overseeing Kim's visits to military units. A graduate of the Mangyongdae Revolutionary Institute, he was tapped by Kim Jong Il as a rising star in the early 1990s when he was director of the General Logistics Department.[29] In his current position, he plays a key role in helping Kim maintain tight control over the military.[30] In addition, this job allegedly carries with it the more sensitive responsibility of grooming Kim's successor in the matter of military affairs.

COMMAND AND CONTROL OF THE ARMED FORCES

In addition to the informal connections to the supreme leader, the KPA has a formal structure, through which command and control is carried out. (See Figure 8.) At the top of the command structure sits the NDC and the Supreme Commander. Under the 1972 constitution, the Chief of State was invested with the command and control of the

armed forces. This was revised in the 1992 constitution where this authority was transferred to the NDC chairman, thus investing in this position the authority of the Supreme Commander. It has the power to declare war, issue mobilization orders in an emergency, promote senior military officers, and guide the armed forces and defense construction work. The Central Military Committee (of the KWP) is next in order of seniority—it is tasked with the administrative tasking of the North Korean armed forces and interacting with critical KWP defense-oriented institutions. Below this level, the Ministry of People's Armed Forces and the General Staff oversee the day-to-day operations of the forces.

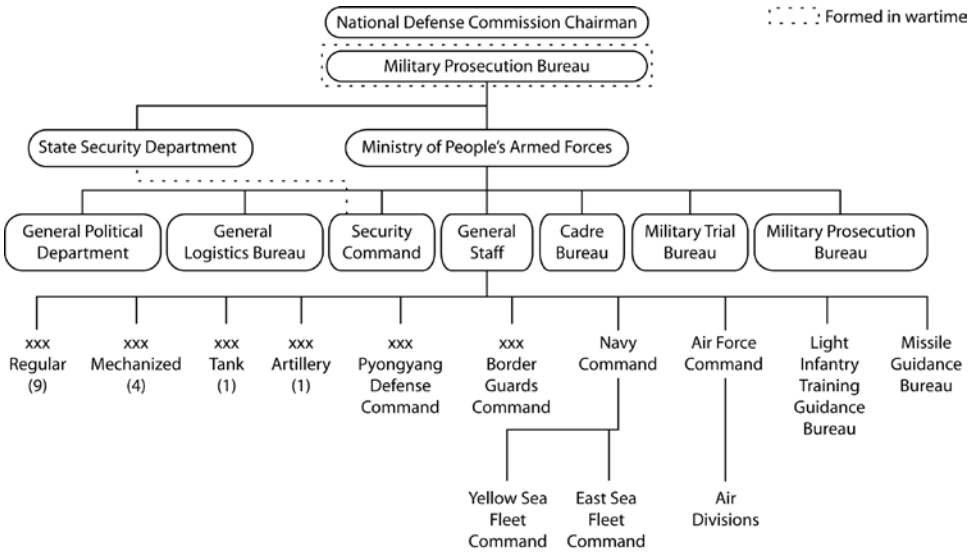

Figure 8. Command and Control of the Armed Forces.

NATIONAL DEFENSE COMMISSION

On September 5, 1998, the 10th term of the SPA, the North Korean parliament, ushered in the Kim Jong Il era. During its first meeting since the death of Kim Il Sung in 1994, the parliament amended the constitution to overhaul the ruling system and approved a sweeping reshuffle of major offices as proposed by the ruling KWP. At the heart of these revisions was the NDC, which was restructured and now defined as the nation's most powerful organ, with Kim Jong Il in the

new position of chairman. His role was described by the North Korean media as that of the supreme leader in charge of spearheading the nation's political, military, and economic organizations; safeguarding the entire state system of the socialist fatherland and the fate of its people; and maintaining the nation's defense capabilities.

The elevation of the NDC to preeminent status placed Kim's unique stamp on the North Korean regime through the creation of a quasi-wartime crisis management system. Originally implemented in 1994 and formalized in 1998 ostensibly to manage a deteriorating economy and a growing confrontation with the United States over North Korea's nuclear program, this system provides a framework for Kim Jong Il to build and isolate his power. It remains in effect probably to prevent a coup and to cope with the country's serious internal problems, thus guarding against internal instability. Operating under a crisis management mode allows Kim Jong Il, as either the Supreme Commander or chairman of a staunch group of loyalists who staff the NDC, to direct the military forces easily and legitimately, affect military personnel changes, mobilize the country to a war footing, and command sectors of the economy. The elevated the status of the NDC also has allowed Kim Jong Il to harness the expertise within the senior leadership critical to national security decisionmaking.

NDC Membership.

The membership of the NDC is tied closely to its mandate of "overall military management." It is a body of leaders of the high command and military logistics, including the Ministry of People's Armed Forces, General Staff, rear forces, political affairs, and the Second Economic Committee.[31] Unlike some other leadership bodies, such as the Politburo, membership on the NDC does not appear to be in any way linked to ceremony. The members on this commission are there because they have a particular competency or have responsibility for a critical security-related portfolio. (See Figure 9.)

Chairman	Kim Jong Il
First Vice Chairman	Cho Myong Nok
Vice Chairman	Yon Hyong Muk (died in October 2005)
Vice Chairman	Yi Yong Mu
Member	Kim Il Chol
Member	Kim Yong Chun
Member	Chon Pyong Ho
Member	Choe Yong Su (?)
Member	Paek Se Pong (?)

Figure 9. NDC Membership.

A major question facing Pyongyang watchers is whether this rise in the KPA's role in the formal leadership is a result of Kim's ability to co-opt the military's support for his rule or, conversely, his acceptance of the growing power of this interest group. Those at the top of the leadership list, such as Cho Myong Nok (Director of the General Political Bureau), Kim Il Chol (Minister of the People's Armed Forces), and Kim Yong Chun (Chief of the General Staff), at least are known to be close associates of Kim Jong Il. Their loyalty is key to running the armed forces.[32]

Cho Myong Nok. VMAR Cho Myong Nok, a former commander of the North Korean Air Force, was appointed director of the General Political Bureau in the mid-1990s. He is considered a close associate of Kim Jong Il and is the foremost leader in political affairs among North Korea's military elite. He is a member of both the KWP Central Committee and the CMC. He is responsible for the ideological indoctrination, training, and reliability of the North Korean military. Cho enjoys a reputation as an excellent tactician, but how much clout he actually wields with Kim Jong Il on military issues is questionable. Cho accompanies Kim on tours of military units in the field and made a key speech commemorating the third anniversary of Kim Il Song's death in special ceremonies on July 8, 1997.[33] In October 2000, he led a North Korean delegation to the United States, which for a time laid the foundation for the easing of tensions between the two countries.

Kim Il Chol. VMAR Kim Il Chol was appointed Minister of the People's Armed Forces in September 1998, filling a vacancy left by MAR Choe Kwang, who died in February 1997. A former commander of the Navy (a post he held since 1982), Kim's promotion to his current

post represents the highest rank and position of authority ever attained by a North Korean naval officer.[34] His appointment came as a surprise to many North Korea watchers. It is speculated that he was brought into the leadership as a counterweight to Cho Myong Nok. In other words, by creating two centers of power within the high command, Kim Jong Il is able to elicit their loyalty by maintaining each as a check on the other.[35] In the wake of his demotion from NDC vice chairman to member at the 11th SPA meeting in September 2003, his political status is unclear.

Kim Yong Chun. VMAR Kim Yong Chun was appointed Chief of the General Staff Department in 1995, after uncovering a plot by the 6th Corps, which he commanded.[36] This action endeared him to Kim Jong Il, and he has been considered a close confidant ever since. As Chief of the General Staff, Kim is responsible for all operational matters involving North Korean troops. While he is subordinate to Kim Il Chol and the Ministry of People's Armed Forces,[37] in reality Kim Yong Chun wields more influence by virtue of his unfettered access to the Great Leader.

Yi Yong Mu. The NDC's impact on the formal leadership lineup was made clear by 2001, when Yi Yong Mu, vice chairman of the NDC, dramatically catapulted to the 12th spot. Yi began his rise in the early 1960s when he became the first deputy director of the General Political Bureau (GPB). In the early 1970s, he entered the CC and SPA and, in 1974, he became director of the GPB and a member of the Politburo. Three years later, he mysteriously vanished from public view, not to reappear until 1988 when he was listed as an associate CC member.[38] After serving in a number of posts in the state apparatus,[39] in 1998 he was appointed vice chairman of the NDC and promoted to the rank of vice marshal. Yi allegedly is tied to the Kim family through marriage.

*Chon Pyong Ho***.** Chon has oversight for military logistics within the KWP Secretariat and also has served on the NDC since 1990. His career has been based in the party apparatus, first serving in the KWP Central Committee's Organization Guidance Department (OGD) and later in the Machine Industry and Commercial Affairs Department.[40] Even though he is not in the military, he has long been considered one of the crucial figures in military policy decisionmaking. His

advanced age (79), however, has led many to speculate that his role within the Kim Jong Il administration has begun to decline. But until another leader emerges who can equal his expertise in military logistics, his position within the hierarchy appears safe.

Yon Hyong Muk. Yon Hyong Muk, who served as premier during the third 7-year economic plan (1987-93) and as member of the NDC since 1998, was promoted to vice chairman of the commission as part of the reshuffle of the NDC that took place at the 11th SPA in 2003. Yon Hyong Muk entered the leadership in 1974 and rose through the state apparatus to become Premier in 1988. But, as North-South ties worsened, he was dismissed and sent to run the remote northerly Chagang province. He made a name for himself by leading a campaign to build local power stations and was recalled to Pyongyang to take a place on the NDC. For the last few years, Yon was the only other member of the leadership (besides Kim Jong Il) to sit on the Politburo, Secretariat, and NDC. Yon Hyong Muk died in October 2005.

Choe Yong Su. Choe Yong Su replaced Paek Hak Nim as Minister of Public Security in July 2003 and assumed a position on the NDC in September 2003. Chu Sang Song replaced Choe as the country's senior police official, although the latter retained his place on the NDC. In September 2003, Choe assumed the post of Chairman of the SPA's Legislative Committee. It is hard to reconcile Choe's current position with membership on the NDC.[41] The fact that his name did not appear on the funeral committee list for Yon Hyong Muk would suggest that Choe has been dropped from the NDC.[42]

Paek Se Pong. Paek Se Pong, a SPA member, joined the NDC as part of the reshuffle in 2003. His real identity has been a mystery to Pyongyang watchers ever since. Some have speculated that he is attached to Kim Jong Il's bodyguard service.[43] Others have said that Paek Se Pong is an alias for Kim's second son and alleged heir apparent, Kim Chong Chol.[44]

North Korean media reporting on the recent state funeral Yon Hyong Muk suggests that Paek Se Pong may have been stripped of his NDC membership and possibly reassigned as an official in the party Central Committee. Pyongyang radio and the party daily *Rodong Sinmun*'s listing of the state funeral committee placed the

name of Paek Se Pong well below the traditional position reserved for officials of NDC status. Paek's name on the funeral committee list—a deliberately ordered listing of 49 members of the senior leadership—was placed apart from the first 16 members of the committee, who are party Politburo members and alternate members, NDC members, and Central Committee secretaries.[45] Although the media report of the funeral committee list refers to the officials only as "chairman" and "members" and not by official position, it is apparent that the list follows the North's customary protocol ranking.[46]

Aging Elite.

A cursory examination of the NDC membership reveals that it is populated with old men, many of who are not in good health. (See Figure 10.) Cho Myong Nok, who was in charge of Yon Myong Muk's funeral, is known to have had several treatments in foreign countries (primarily China) due to chronic renal failure and is in precarious health. Yi Yong Mu, at age 82, is the oldest official holding a government position among the military defense sector. His health also is known to be fragile.

Name	Position	Illness	Treatment
Kim Jong Il	NDC Chairman	Heart disease, kidney, and liver ailments	North Korea, China*
Yon Hyong Muk	NDC Vice Chairman	Heart disease. Died in October 2005.	France/Russia
Cho Myong Nok	NDC Vice Chairman	Kidney disease	China
Kim Il Chol	NDC Member	Health problems	Europe
Paek Nam Sun	Minister of Foreign Affairs	Kidney disease	China/Singapore
Choe Ik Gyu	Minister of Culture	Heart disease	Germany
Yi Ul Sol	Former Commander, Guard Command	Diabetes and heart disease	
Im Tong Uk	First Vice Director, KWP United Front Department	Lung cancer	Russia
Kim Yong Il	Vice Foreign Minister	Heart Disease	China
Kim Kyong Hui	Kim Jong Il's sister	Heart Disease	North Korea

* According to some rumors, Kim used part of his unannounced trip to China in January 2006 to receive a health checkup. "National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong Il is in Beijing," Seoul MBC TV (January 11, 2006).

Figure 10. Key Leaders' Illnesses.[47]

Other NDC members, including Kim Yong Chun (age 69), Kim Il Chol (age 72), and Chon Pyong Ho (age 79), are reaching the end of their active careers. Despite the fact that Choe Yong Su and Paek Se Pong are known to be younger than Kim Jong Il, the fact that important position holders of the most important government organ will likely die or step down in the near future could prove to be a major handicap for North Korea. It also shows that general change is taking place very slowly.[48]

The death of Yon Hyong Muk will not cause any sudden position change. But if others, such as Cho Myong Nok or Yi Yong Mu, also die in the near future, Kim Jong Il will find it difficult to fill in the power gap quickly, thus contributing to the already unpredictable internal power struggle inside North Korea.

CENTRAL MILITARY COMMITTEE

According to Article 27 of the KWP constitution, the CMC oversees implementation of the party's military policies, guides development and production of munitions, and has command and control over North Korea's armed forces.[49] Established in 1962, the KWP CMC "debates and decides on methods of implementing the Party's military policies." The CMC is also responsible for selecting the Supreme Commander subject to the ratification of the KWP Central Committee.

Since the restructuring of the regime in 1998, the relationship between the Great Leader and the armed forces has changed fundamentally. Under Kim Il Sung, control of the armed forces was exercised through the KWP. The information flow was directly through the chain of command: KPA to CMC to Kim. As noted earlier, with the restructuring of the regime in 1998, Kim Jong Il has engineered a more direct relationship with the military. As such, the KWP's role in the relationship between the supreme leader and the armed forces seems to have diminished.[50] According to some North Korea watchers, since the 1998 restructuring and the elevation of the NDC, the CMC no longer plays a vigorous role in military policy.[51] (See Figure 11.)

Position	Name
Chairman	Kim Jong Il
Member	O Kuk Yol (Director, KWP Operations Department)
Member	Paek Hak Nim (former Minister of Public Security)
Member	Kim Chol Man (Alternate Member of the Politburo)
Member	Kim Kang Hwan (former Director, Military Affairs Department)
Member	VMAR Yi Ul Sol (former Commander, Guard Command)
Member	VMAR Cho Myong Nok (Director, General Political Bureau)
Member	VMAR Kim Il Chol (Minister of the People's Armed Forces)
Member	Choe Sang Uk (former Director, Artillery Guidance Bureau)
Member	Yi Pong Won (Deputy Director, General Political Bureau)
Member	General Kim Tu Nam (Chief, Kumsusan Memorial Palace)
Member	VM Kim Ik Hyon (former Director, KWP Civil Defense Department)
Member	MAR Yi Ha Il (former Director, KWP Military Affairs Department)
Member	Kim Myong Kuk (Commander, 108th Mechanized Corps)
Member	VMAR Pak Ki So (former Commander, Pyongyang Defense Command)
Member	Yi Yong Chol (First Deputy Director, KWP Organization and Guidance Department)
Member	VMAR Kim Yong Chun (Chief of the General Staff)

Figure 11. CMC Membership.[52]

In recent years, there has been much speculation about the CMC. On occasion, official North Korean communiqués would make mention of the body, as in 1997 when Kim Jong Il expressed his condolences to Jiang Zemin on the death of Deng Xiaoping.

> I am shocked to learn that Comrade Deng Xiaoping passed away due to illness. On behalf of the Korean Workers' Party [KWP] Central Committee, the KWP CMC, the DPRK Government, and all the Korean people, and in my own name, I wish to express deep condolences to you and to the CPC Central Committee, the PRC Government, the fraternal Chinese people, and the families of Comrade Deng Xiaoping through you.

In the same year, Kim's election as KWP Secretary General was publicly endorsed by both the CMC and Central Committee.

However, after 1998, mention of the commission virtually stopped in the North Korean press. In the last few years, a series of alleged CMC internal documents have surfaced in Japan and South Korea.[53] One document dated April 2004 laid out instructions from

Kim Jong Il, who was described as the chairman of the KWP CMC, a position that was rumored to be vacant since Kim Il Song's death.[54] These regulations were issued in an attempt to "tighten internal discipline." But, if authentic, what is interesting is that the CMC recognizes the supremacy of the NDC. The "Regulations" provide for concentrating all political, military, diplomatic, and other powers in the hands of the NDC, and "the decision of NDC Chairman Kim Jong Il on all issues is to be obeyed."

While there is little doubt that the CMC has been diminished in stature, it still appears to play an important role on three levels. First, in coordination with the Central Committee, the CMC is responsible for propagating the party line on military policy.

Second, as will be discussed below, the CMC is populated with people critical to regime security. It is the one part of the KWP organizational structure which continues to play a role in power politics within the regime.

Third, on the policy side, the CMC appears to play a facilitation role, ensuring that relevant parts of the KWP apparatus fulfill their defense-related responsibilities. This is most clearly visible with regard to procurement policy. After the Ministry of the People's Armed Forces (MPAF) establishes requirements through the General Staff Department, they are sent to the NDC, which validates them and passes them to the CMC. Since much of the defense industry exists within the KWP, the CMC is the logical institution to oversee the translation of military requirements into munitions.[55]

Membership.

Kim Jong Il became a member of the CMC in the wake of the Sixth KWP National Congress held in October 1980, when he was elected one of the five members of the Political Bureau Standing Committee of the party Central Committee, and was concurrently made a member of the Central Committee Secretariat. The CMC served as his most formal link to the military until May 1990, when he assumed office as the first vice chairman of the NDC.

Unlike the Chinese dual CMCs in the state and party apparatuses, the North Korean CMC does not share identical membership with the NDC. With the exception of Cho Myong Nok and Kim Il Chol,

both of whom became members of the CMC in 1980 (the same year Kim Jong Il did), and Kim Yong Chun, none of the members are dual-hatted to the NDC. Membership in the CMC appears to be linked to specific channels of authority and security-related information. Its membership includes a number of lower-ranking officials who are either close to Kim Jong Il or play a critical role in regime protection. These are men that Kim Jong Il has relied on to exert his control over the country and provide unique intelligence critical to national security policy.[56] As such, it could be argued that Kim utilizes information gathered through the CMC to inform deliberations in the NDC.

Links to KWP.

O Kuk Yol. The Operations Department is responsible for waging espionage activities abroad, including infiltration into Japan and South Korea, SOF operations, and kidnappings.[57] The department also oversees the training of the country's elite intelligence agents. Since the early 1990s, the director of this department has been General O Kuk Yol, a former Air Force commander and chief of the General Staff.[58] He has been referred to as Kim Jong Il's alter ego and belongs to the core group of supporters within the second generation of the military leadership. In the last year, however, there has been much speculation over O Kuk Yol's relationship to Kim. In November 2004, reports surfaced that O Se U, O Kuk Yol's son, had defected to the United States. The impact and veracity of these reports is not clear. However, O Kuk Yol, by all indications, still holds his post as head of the KWP Operations Department.

Yi Ha Il. The Military Affairs Department has been the source of great speculation among North Korea watchers. It was assumed that it served a liaison function with the defense establishment, but its responsibilities were unclear. Recent reports suggest that its portfolio includes handling the administrative affairs of the NDC.[59] The NDC has jurisdiction over the creation and abolition of central agencies in the defense sector, appointments and dismissals of key military leaders, and the proclamation of war status and mobilization. The Military Affairs Department is responsible for collecting the information necessary to make these decisions and then delivering

the NDC's decisions to party, administration, and military organizations. The director of this department from 1982 until recently was VMAR Yi Ha Il.[60] Another member of the second generation of military leaders, Yi has been a close associate of Kim Jong Il since the early 1980s. Yi has been mentioned in the press as late as February 2005 as part of Kim's birthday festivities. However, he was not on the leadership rostrum at the central report meeting commemorating the event. The last time he was seen on the leadership rostrum was in July 2004 to mark the 10th anniversary of Kim Il Sung's death.

Kim Ik Hyon. VMAR Kim Ik Hyon is a first generation military officer, who moved throughout the military and party apparatus. In the early 1970s, he was the commander of the 4th Corps before being promoted to the General Staff (deputy chief) and later to the Ministry of People's Armed Forces (vice minister). In 1991, he became the director of the KWP Civil Defense Department, which oversees the country's reserve units. He apparently was replaced by Chang Song U, the brother of Chang Song Taek, as head of the KWP Civil Defense Department in February 2005.[61] No mention has been made in recent years of his status on the CMC.[62]

Kim Kang Hwan. Colonel General Kim Kang Hwan was a rising star in the KPA from the late 1960s to the 1980s. In 1968, he was promoted to major general at the age of 38 because his father's close relationship to the Kim family.[63] In the 1970s, he became the deputy chief of the operations bureau of the MPAF and later commander of the 1st Corps. His links to Kim Jong Il apparently go back to the mid-1970s when he led the purge of Kim Yong U, chief of the General Political Bureau, who had expressed resentment toward the Dear Leader's philosophy of monism, one of the fundamental principles of *juche* thought. Following Kim Jong Il's formal accession to power in 1980, Kim Kang Hwan's career advancement moved quickly with his appointment as deputy chief of the General Staff and later to director of the party's Military Department (taking over from Kim Tu Nam). By the early 1990s, he was considered one of the "gang of three" (with O Kuk Yol and Kim Tu Nam) within the KPA, who upheld Kim Jong Il's military line. Since the mid-1990s, however, Kim Kang Hwan's career has stalled. At present, he does not appear to hold a formal portfolio.

Yi Yong Chol. Yi Yong Chol is the first vice director of the KWP OGD, the most powerful of all the 22 Central Committee departments. It has the responsibility for vetting senior appointments above the provincial secretary level within the KWP, vice director and above within the Cabinet, and general grade officers within the military and security forces. It also carries out political surveillance and investigations. It has close connections to the KWP's CMC and the MPAF's General Political Bureau. Yi is responsible for the military affairs portfolio within the OGD.

Links to Security Apparatus.

Yi Ul Sol. MAR Yi Ul Sol is the only other marshal in the North Korean armed forces besides Kim Jong Il. He began his military career with the Chinese Route Armies and, after attending a Soviet military academy, rose through the ranks of the KPA. He was appointed to the CMC in 1968 and the NDC in 1990. Since the mid-1980s, he has been the commander of the Guard Command, which is responsible for the security of Kim Jong Il and other senior leaders.[64] Because of Yi's age, he apparently stepped down as director of the Guard Command. But until his retirement from the NDC in 2003, his age had not been seen as detracting from his influence within the leadership.[65]

Paek Hak Nim. VMAR Paek Hak Nim is a member of the first (partisan) generation that is slipping from the ranks of power. Until his retirement in 2003, he was the Minister of Public Security. He was close to Kim Il Sung, but never enjoyed the same status under Kim Jong Il, although he was appointed to the NDC in 1998, a position he lost in 2003. Like fellow "partisan generation" member Yi Ul Sol, Paek Hak Nim has disappeared from the front row on the speaker's platform during public celebrations, a likely sign that he no longer figures prominently in regime politics. For that reason, his membership on the CMC is questionable.

Pak Ki So. Until 2003 VMAR Pak Ki So was in charge of the Pyongyang Defense Command. He is a second-generation revolutionary, who is known for his expertise in mechanized army corps. He served as a member of the 79th Supreme People Assemblies, and was confirmed to have served as a member of the

KWP Central Committee in 1986 and the CMC in 1995. He led the Mechanized Army Corps in 1986, and was entrusted with the major responsibility of defending Pyongyang in 1995. He was promoted to the rank of General in 1992 and to VMAR rank in 1997.[66]

Kim Tu Nam. General Kim Tu Nam is the chief of the Kumsusan Memorial Palace, which is where Kim Il Sung's body lies in state. He also is the chief of the Office of Military Officers, which is responsible for watching officers in the KPA. The headquarters for this office has a total of 21 men: the military officer (office chief), 5 assistant military officers, and 15 staff members. In addition, Kim has an "operation team" made up some 120 top cadres from the KPA and the KWP.[67] Kim Tu Nam is the youngest of three brothers of Kim Yong Nam, chairman of the SPA Standing Committee (equivalent to parliament president). A graduate of the Mangyongdae Revolutionary Institute, Kim held candidate status in the Politburo and was head of the KWP Military Department in the early 1980s.[68] He has served as an instructor to Kim Jong Il in military science.[69] Kim Tu Nam played a significant role in establishing the monolithic leadership system in the military.

Links to High Command.

Kim Chol Man. Kim began his career in the military, serving with the Communist Chinese Route Armies in the 1930s and 1940s before rising through the KPA apparatus in the 1950s and 1960s to become deputy chief of the General Staff.[70] In 1970, he became a member of the Politburo and, 10 years later, a member of the CMC. In the 1990s, he was put in charge of the Second Economic Committee, taking over for Kim Jong Il.[71] Since the late 1990s, his status and influence within the leadership appears to have risen. Some sources indicate he was appointed to the Secretariat.[72]

Yi Pong Won. A graduate of Mangyongdae Revolutionary Institute and the Kim Il Song Higher Party School, General Yi Pong Won served as responsible secretary of the Kaesong Municipal Party Committee, responsible secretary of the South Hamgyong Provincial Party Committee, and deputy director of the Organization and Guidance Department of the party Central Committee. In December 1986, he was appointed as deputy bureau chief in charge of organizational

affairs of the GPB of the KPA, which oversees political and ideological works within the military.[73] He is a military ideological expert, and has been rumored as a possible successor to Cho Myong Nok as director of GPB. He also is rumored to be a rival of O Kuk Yol.[74] His position on the CMC has been a subject of speculation, especially in the late 1990s, when it was rumored he was purged for harboring "antiparty" sentiments and publicly executed.[75]

Choe Sang Uk. Colonel General Choe Sang Uk, another graduate of Mangyongdae Revolutionary Institute, has been listed as a member of the CMC since 1980, presumably brought in as part of the military turnover related to Kim Jong Il's rise to the post of heir apparent. Very little is known about his background other than his appointment in the 1980s as director of the Artillery Guidance Bureau.[76] The bureau supposedly has control over North Korea's ballistic missiles.

Kim Myong Kuk. General Kim Myong Kuk is a second generation military leader and graduate of the Mangyongdae Revolutionary Institute and military schooling in the Soviet Union (Frunze Military Academy). His career began to be noticed in the mid-1980s when he served as the director of the General Staff's Operations Bureau. He is noted as an expert in operational planning. He also has overseen the planning for many of the key military demonstrations, including the military parade commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the military in April 1992, and the 50th anniversary of the founding of the party in October 1995, as well as several of the KPA's major military exercises. He was elected a candidate member of the KWP Central Committee in June 1989 and a full member in December 1991. By the mid-1990s, his star was firmly on the rise as he was appointed commander of the 108th Mechanized Corps (a frontline corps responsible for operations along the demilitarized zone [DMZ]). He was appointed to the CMC in 1995.

While serving as a military aide to Kim Jong Il in the 1990s, he instructed the leader on three-dimensional warfare, and presented him with a plan for strengthening North Korea's armed forces. According to defector accounts, Kim Myong Kuk "has unofficial channels through mid-level commanders that link the Ministry of People's Armed Forces with the offices of Kim Jong Il." Kim Jong Il makes use of this channel to better understand the thinking within the lower ranks of the KPA high command.

Ministry of People's Armed Forces.

The MPAF is responsible for management and operational control of the armed forces. Prior to 1992, it was under the direct control of the president, with guidance from the NDC and the KWP Military Affairs Department. The 1992 state constitution shifted its control to the NDC.[77]

The minister the PAF officially figures next in the chain of command of North Korea's armed forces after the NDC, but his office has no control over policymaking or decisionmaking in the KPA. (See Figure 12.) The minister of defense, in normal times, has responsibility for matters such as the procurement of weapons, defense research and development, intelligence gathering, and military training. Foreign exchanges and liaison are the province of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The armed forces have little input into this area, although it is consulted. Even when there are direct military talks between North Korea and another state, the military participants are briefed closely as to what they may say by the KWP hierarchy.

Position	Name
Minister	VMAR Kim Il Chol
Vice Minister	General Yi Pyong Uk
Vice Minister	General Yo Chun Sok
Vice Minister	General Kim Chong Gak
Vice Minister	Colonel General Kim Yang Chom
Vice Minister	Colonel General Yi Tae Il
Vice Minister	Lieutenant General Yi Yong Su
Vice Minister	Major General Kim Sang Ik
Director, Cadres Bureau	Colonel General Kim Ki Son

Figure 12. Ministry of People's Armed Forces.

North Korea's military structure combines elements of similar structures in China and the former Soviet Union. The General Staff is organizationally under the command of the Ministry of the PAF, which is answerable to the chairman of the NDC. Functionally, however, the two are separated. In peacetime, the ministry takes charge of military administration, while the General Staff is responsible for operational command. During wartime, the Supreme

Commander would exercise both military administration and operational control directly through the General Staff, bypassing the Ministry of PAF. This dual chain of command ensures that only Kim Jong Il in his capacity as Supreme Commander is able to take the military command at anytime, regardless of peacetime or wartime.

General Staff.

The General Staff Department exercises operational control over the military. It oversees military strategy, operations, training, and exercises. It also has direct command over the Ground Forces corps (artillery corps, tank corps and light infantry), the Naval command, the Air Command, and the Air Defense command.[78] (See Figure 13.)

Position	Name
Chief	VMAR Kim Yong Chun
Deputy Chief	Lieutenant General Hwang Chol San
Deputy Chief	Lieutenant General Kim Kang Hwan
Deputy Chief	Colonel General Chi Ki Son (President, Kim Il Sung Military University)
Deputy Chief	Major General Yi Hong Sun
Deputy Chief	VMAR Yi Chong San
Deputy Chief	VMAR Chon Chae Son
Deputy Chief	Lieutenant General Kwon Chung Yong
Deputy Chief	Colonel General Pak Sung Won
Deputy Chief	Lieutenant General Yi Pong Yuk
Director, Communications Bureau	Colonel General Kim Hyong Ryong
Director, Operations Bureau	General Yi Myong Su
Director, Reconnaissance Bureau	General Kim Tae Sik [79]
Director, Signals Bureau	Lieutenant General Yi Hyong Yong
Director, Combat Training Bureau	Lieutenant General Pang Kwan Pok
Director, Special Operations Bureau	General U Myong Won
Director, Engineering Bureau	Colonel General Kim Yang Chom [80]
Director, Equipment Bureau	General Kang Chang Ho
Director, External Affairs Bureau	General Yi Sang U
Director, Military Supplies/Mobilizaation Bureau	VMAR Yi Chong San
Director, Construction Bureau	General Pak Yun Hwal [81]
Director, Military Publishing Bureau	General Cho Il Sok
Commander, Navy	ADM Kim Yun Sin
Commander, Air Force	Colonel General O Kum Yol
Commander, Artillery Command	General Kim Ha Kyu
Border Security Bureau	N/A
Cryptographic Bureau	N/A
Electronic Warfare Bureau	N/A
Foreign Currency Earning Bureau	N/A
Military Police Bureau	N/A
Nuclear-Chemical Defense Bureau	N/A
Ordnance Bureau	General O Yang Pang
Geological Bureau	N/A
Transportation Bureau	N/A

Figure 13. General Staff. [82]

General Political Bureau.

The GPB is a political instrument of the regime to ensure political control over the army. (See Figure 14.) It undertakes politico-ideological works in the armed forces in support of the directives of the KWP Central Committee. It has its own organizational structure and personnel at every level of the chain of command, through which it collects information on the behavior of officers.

Position	Name
Director	VMAR Cho Myong Nok
Vice Director, Organization	General Hyon Chol Hae
Vice Director, Propaganda	General Pak Chae Kyong
Director, Personnel Bureau	General Kim Ki Son

Figure 14. General Political Bureau.

General Logistics Bureau.

The General Logistics Bureau (GLB) is responsible for rear service support to the KPA, such as: supply, transportation, housing, pay, and medical services. Throughout the early 1990s, Hyon Chol Hae headed the bureau. In 1996, the North Korean press announced that he had been appointed as a vice director of the General Political Bureau, suggesting that he left his post in the GLB. Since then, Hyon has been referred to on occasion as still head of the GLB, but this could be due to errors in reporting.[83] No other person has been publicly identified in this post.

Army Corps.

The North Korean ground forces are composed of a number of corps (infantry, mechanized infantry, tank, artillery, and security), which is further broken down into combat divisions and brigades. (See Figure 15.) Its force structure has been changed a few times since the 1980s for either operational or security reasons. The most dramatic reshuffle took place in 1995, when the 6th Corps was dissolved after a corruption scandal was uncovered involving significant numbers

of the command and political staff and local government officials. The corps' units were absorbed into the 9th Corps, which previously had been located in the Wonsan area. A new corps (as yet unnamed) was formed in the Wonsan area.[84]

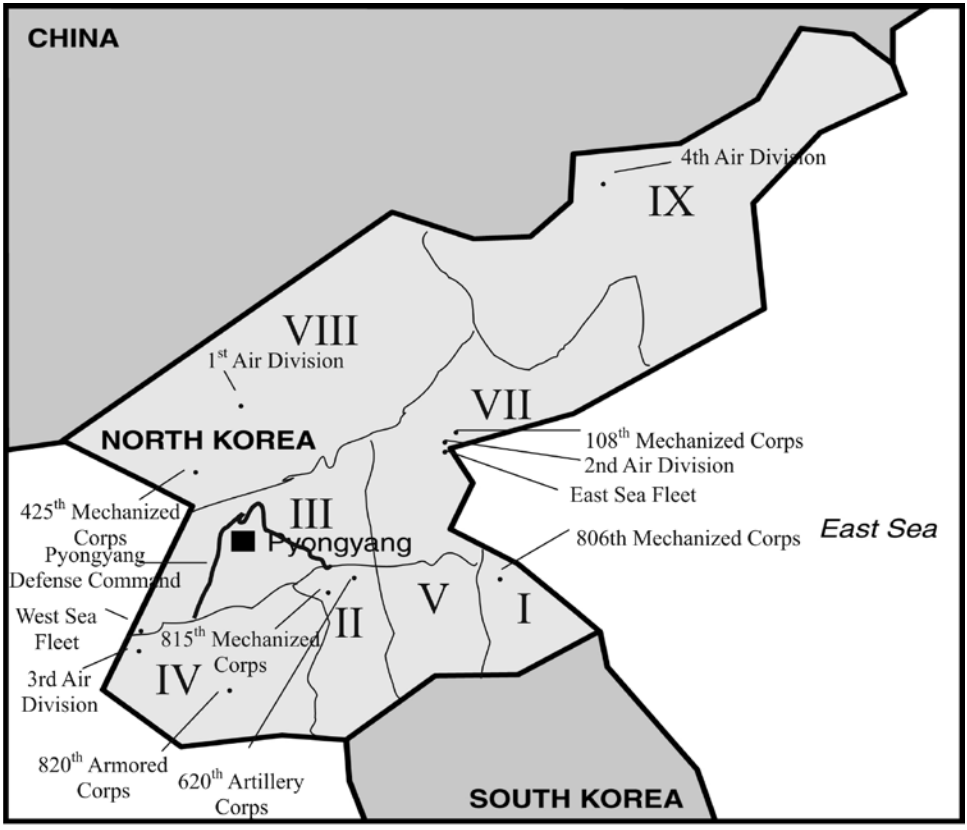

Figure 15. North Korea's Military Deployment.[85]

In 2003, between the annual promotions and the reshuffle of the corps,[86] all of the commanders have been elevated to at least colonel general, with some commanders holding the rank of full general.[87] (See Figure 16.) Whether this was done in an attempt to boost morale within the third generation of officers or as a means of enhancing cohesion within the armed forces and making it more beholding to Pyongyang is unclear. It could also be a reflection of the military-first policy, which is the foundation of the regime's rule.

Name	Command	Predecessor	Comments
N/A	I Corps	VM Chon Chae Son	N/A
Gen. Kim Kyuk Sik	II Corps		Third Generation. Deputy military attaché to Syria. Links to 815th Mechanized Corps. Member of the KWP CC. Allegedly close to Kim Jong Il. One of few regional commanders to travel outside of DPRK.
N/A	III Corps	VM Chang Song U	N/A
N/A	IV Corps	Gen. Chu Sang Song (now Minister of Public Security)	N/A
N/A	V Corps	Gen. Kim Song Kyu	N/A
Col. Gen. Pyon In Son	VII Corps	Gen. Yo Chun Sol	Member of the 11th SPA.
Col. Gen. Kim Yong Un	VIII Corps		Links to the II and V corps. Member of the 10th SPA.
Gen. Kim Hyong Yong	IX Corps	Col. Gen. Chong Ho Kyun	There are rumors Kim has been replaced.
Col. Gen. Choe	Wonson Corps	Lt. Gen. Yi Chong Bu	Member of the Hyong Kwan 11th SPA.
Gen. Kim Myong Kuk	108th Mechanized Corps		Third Generation. Mangyongdae graduate. Links to the General Staff's Operations Bureau. Member CMC. Adviser to Kim Jong Il.
Col. Gen. Tong Yun	425th Mechanized Corps		Links to 108th Mechanized Kang Corps. Member of the KWP CC. Allegedly related to Chong Suk, Kim Jong Il's mother.
Col. Gen. Paek Sang Ho	806th Mechanized Corps	Gen. Kang Yong Ho	Links to the 425th Mechanized Corps.
Col. Gen. Kim Hyong Yong	815th Corps Mechanized Corps		Third Generation. Former commander of the IX Corps. Close to Kim Jong Il.
Col. Gen. Chon Ki Yon	820th Armored Corps		Third Generation. Links to the Tank Guidance Bureau. There are rumors Chon has been replaced.
Col. Gen. Chong Ho Kyun	620th Artillery Corps		Links to IX Corps. Alternate member of the KWP CC. There are rumors Chong has been replaced.
Gen. Kim Ha Kyu	Artillery Command	Col. Gen. Choe Sang Uk	Member of the KWP CC. Close to Kim Jong Il.

Figure 16. Corps Commanders.

While there is very little information in the public domain concerning the KPA at the Corps level,[88] a few points can be gleaned from an historical analysis of the various commanders.

- Horizontal loyalties (such as military academy classes) appear to be restricted, as are career bonds that could come about between officers through sequential appointments to same commands.
- First time promotions to corps commandership (especially front line corps) appear to come from divisions within those corps.
- There are lateral transfers from front line corps to rear area corps and vise versa.
- It is not uncommon that commanders have commanded or have links to more than one corps.
- It is not uncommon for commanders to serve time in senior level commands (General Staff, Artillery Command) before returning to the corps.
- On occasion, commanders have backgrounds in other services (Air Force, Navy).
- Corps commanders have very little interaction with provincial secretaries. Adherence to chains of command is mandated.
- Senior corps officers normally rank between 60-80 on protocol lists, but their influence often is not reflected because of ties they sometimes have to senior KPA officials or Kim Jong Il.
- When purges occur at the senior level of the high command, it can lead to reshuffles in the corps because of links with military leaders now out of favor.
- With very few exceptions, corps commanders do not travel outside North Korea.

The Other Services: Navy and Air Force.

Traditionally, the Army has dominated the North Korean military system. The key patronage systems that guarantee the survival of the regime reside within the ground forces. Kim Il Sung and now Kim Jong Il have relied primarily on key generals and marshals to consolidate and hold onto power. As a consequence, the Army

has garnered the most influence among the services. For all intents and purposes, this relative imbalance in power among the services persists.

Navy. In recent years, there have been some indications that the North Korean Navy's status has begun to rise.[89] General Kim Yun Sim's (the commander of the Navy) rise through the ranks has been rapid, considering the promotion system in North Korea is notoriously slow and cumbersome and based on an officer's links to a critical patronage system. His career began in the late 1970s, but he was not identified publicly until 1991 when he became commander of the West Sea Fleet. He was promoted to lieutenant general and made deputy commander of the Navy in November 1996. One year later, he was promoted again to colonel general and appointed commander of the Navy, replacing Kim Il Chol, who became Minister of the PAF. While Kim Yun Sim is rumored to be a brilliant naval tactician, he also has proven himself in recent years to be adept at surviving the Machiavellian landscape of North Korean politics. Even though he exercised direct control over the North Korean naval units during the June 1999 West Sea battle in which the North was roundly defeated, he was not purged. In fact, he was promoted to a full general in April 2002. He is ranked in the 30th position within the North Korean leadership.

Following the June 2002 West Sea incident, Kim Jong Il's interest in the Navy was highlighted both in the North and South Korean press. Broadcasts and magazines based in Pyongyang even went so far as to note that "Chairman Kim attaches so much importance to the Navy that he thinks the Navy should be developed as the axis of North Korean military strength in the future." While this may be an overstatement, it does draw attention to the fact that the Navy's profile has been on the rise in recent years.

Air Force. The Air Force has been the launching pad for several key figures in the North Korean regime. O Kuk Yol was its commander in the early 1970s. Cho Myong Nok commanded the KPAF for 17 years (1978-95) before turning over the reins to the current commander, Colonel General O Kum Chol. Like Kim Yun Sin, O Kum Yol has proven himself an adept regime survivor. He was one of the few Air Force survivors from the 1992 purge of the Soviet-educated cadre within the high command.[90]

Unlike the Navy, the Air Force has stagnated over the decades. The force has become obsolete with limited access to spare parts and constant fuel shortages. In terms of power politics, there is no indication that the Air Force has any influence beyond issues directly related to its mission.

REFORMING THE PRAETORIAN GUARD

In the last few years, those institutions invested with responsibility for regime protection have been reshuffled. In some cases, the commanders have died and in other cases retired. Three key figures play a prominent role in guaranteeing the security of the regime from internal threats. (See Figure 17.) In all three cases, many assume that command now resides with officers from the third generation.

Name	Command	Predecessor	Comments
N/A	Pyongyang Defense Command	VM Pak Ki So	N/A
Col. Gen. Bom (?)	Guard Command	MAR Yi Ul Sol	Rising star in the Guard Kim Sung Bureau since 2000. No official announcement.
Col. Gen. Kim Won Hong	Military Security Command	Gen. Won Ung Hui	Links to the VII and IX corps.

Figure 17. Praetorian Guard.

Guard Command.[91]

The Guard Command's origins date to 1946, when the elements of the 90th Training Command were carved out to provide security for North Korea's emerging leadership. It has gone through a number of reorganizations and, since the 1990s, has grown in importance as the heart of the regime's praetorian guard.[92]

Although formally subordinated to the MPAF, the Guard Command reports directly to Kim Jong Il in his capacity as head of the KWP.[93] It is responsible for the personal security of Kim and other high-ranking officials, as well as surveillance of high ranking

political and military officials. It also shares responsibility for the defense of the capital with the Pyongyang Defense Command and the Pyongyang Antiaircraft Artillery Command. Located in Puksae-tong, Moranbong-kuyok, and Pyongyang, the corps-sized Guard Command is equipped with tanks, artillery, and airplanes. One brigade is deployed at each villa of Kim Il Song and Kim Jong Il located throughout North Korea.

According to numerous sources, the long-time commander of the Guard Command, Yi Ul Sol, retired in 2003. His successor has not been announced. However, it should be noted that some speculation points to Colonel General Kim Song Bom as the new commander.[94] Kim, like many other senior officers in the Guard Command, apparently is part of the third generation. His rise in the Guard Command has been rapid. He was promoted to lieutenant general in October 2000, selected to the 11th SPA in 2003, and was quoted in the North Korean press in February 2005 when he made a speech at a MPAF meeting lauding Kim Jong Il as the "heart and soul" of the KPA. He was at that time identified as a colonel general, which is in line with other corps level commanders.[95]

Pyongyang Defense Command.

The Pyongyang Defense Command is the corps-level unit responsible for the protection of Pyongyang and the surrounding areas. It takes its tasking from the General Staff, but has close ties to Kim Jong Il. Prior to the 1980s, it was subordinated to the Guard Bureau (now Guard Command), but was part of a realignment to streamline the chain of command and deconflict information flow. The Pyongyang Defense Command is composed of 70,000 troops and numerous tanks, armored personnel carriers, and artillery systems. It works closely with the Third Corps in ensuring the security of the capital.[96]

Since 1995, VMAR Pak Ki So was in charge of the Pyongyang Defense Command. According to informed sources, he was replaced in 2003, most likely for age reasons (he was born in 1929).[97] No successor has been announced publicly. Many, however, believe his successor hails from the third generation.

Security Command.

The Security Command exists as an additional layer of security within the armed forces and as a counterweight to the GPB.[98] Its ultimate portfolio is the insurance of regime security through surveillance of the military. It is organized under the MPAF, but works under the direct control of the State Security Agency. Like the GPB, it has its own agencies at every level of the military down to the battalion level. Through its own field agencies, it seeks out anti-regime activity, investigates political crimes, and conducts extensive political surveillance. Even the political officers of the General Political Bureau are not immune from its close scrutiny.

The Security Command was upgraded from a bureau in the mid-1990s, allegedly in response to its contribution to uncovering the corruption in the 6th Corps in 1995. In 1998, the command assumed responsibility for key internal security and law enforcement activities, until then the jurisdiction of civilian authorities. Then commander Won Ung Hui was asked to spearhead the "corruption" investigations against officials and KWP cadres who had contacts with South Koreans and other foreigners in the context of attracting foreign investment in Nampo, Najin, and Sonbong, the centers of foreign business construction and ostensibly economic liberalization.[99]

In May 2004, Won Ung Hui died of an unnamed illness and was succeeded by Colonel General Kim Won Hong, an officer who was first identified publicly in 1997 when he signed Choe Kwang's obituary. His career appears to have been confined to the field commands, especially the 7th and 9th corps. Last year he was rumored to have been demoted in connection with the leaking of the bird flu epidemic in North Korea. He allegedly was reduced in rank to lieutenant general for failing to manage effectively the telephone use by foreign trade firms operated by the military.[100]

THE KPA AND REGIME POLITICS

Periodically, totalitarian regimes need to undergo a transformation in politics and relationships among personnel and institutions. This is a natural outcome of a leader's paranoia or his efforts to carry out policy reforms. A body of evidence suggests that North Korea may

be involved in such a transformation. Over the last year, Kim Jong Il has taken steps to both secure his power and, some believe, position the country for much needed flexibility in economic policy. Whether or not the KPA supports Kim's efforts is not yet clear. The fact that the high command has been reshuffled and its chains of command have been altered suggests that it may be a source of concern.

Unfolding Succession Struggle.

One major reason, many contend, Kim has sought to restructure the regime is to ensure the continuation of his family's dynasty. Over the last few years, a succession struggle has been underway inside North Korea as Kim Jong Il endeavors to name an heir apparent. As various individuals and institutions line up in support of particular successors, the result could be a galvanizing effect whereby factions are formed from leaders with similar vested interests. Early speculation was that the military and security apparatus had thrown their support behind Kim Chong Nam,[101] Kim Jong Il's oldest son, while Kim's personal apparatus was trying to lay the foundation for anointing one of his two sons (Kim Chong Chol, Kim Chong Un) by his late third wife/mistress, Ko Yong Hui.[102] If this were true, such a situation could potentially place the most powerful elements of the regime apparatus in opposition with one another, thus diverting the leadership's attention from anything other than internal politics.[103]

The notion of dynastic succession in the communist era has not always been something the military has supported readily, and even revolted against it in a coup attempt in the early 1990s. In the late 1990s, the military allegedly was sold on the idea that Kim Chong Nam would take over from his father, as Kim Jong Il did from Kim Il Sung. After a decade of purges, many believed that the military finally had come to terms with this decision. Over the last few years, however, the situation has changed dramatically. Kim Chong Nam has been in forced exile, periodically emerging in various countries. According to some reports, he has escaped at least two assassination attempts in Austria and China. His ties to his father apparently have been severed. According to many media accounts, Kim Chong Il has tried to push the military to shift its support to Kim Chong Chol, Ko Young Hui's first son.

This shift in the KPA's position (if it has happened) probably is due in large part to the retirement or purging of key military and security officials. In April 2004, the de facto number two leader, Chang Song Taek, Kim Jong Il's brother-in-law, disappeared from public view, only to reappear just recently at public functions.[104] Chang's two brothers have played critical roles in the security apparatus protecting Kim Jong Il. Chang Song U, who had begun his rise under Kim Il Sung, was the commander of the 3rd Corps, while Chang Song Kil was deputy commander of the 4th Corps and later political commissar of the elite 820th Tank Corps. Both are believed to have been moved to less sensitive posts.[105] Choe Yong Su, the Minister of Public Security (another ally of Chang Song Taek) was replaced in 2003.

More evidence of Kim's apparent strategy to bring the KPA under control appeared in the election of deputies to the 11th SPA in August 2003. What was most notable about this election, in which half of the 687 deputies from the 10th SPA election was replaced, is that 11 officers with vice marshal and army corps commander level ranks lost their deputy positions. It is quite unprecedented for four frontline army commanders, such as Pyongyang Defense Command Commander Pak Ki So and 1st Corps Commander Chon Chae Son, as well as four mechanized corps commanders, including 108th Mechanized Corps Commander Kim Myong Kuk, to not be included among the deputies.

EFFORTS AT ECONOMIC REFORM: GUNS OR BUTTER

In addition to laying the foundation for his succession, Kim Jong Il has had economic reasons for restructuring his relationship with the KPA. If any meaningful reforms are to take hold in North Korea, the defense budget will have to bear some of the cutbacks.

North Korea's Defense Spending.

The share of North Korea's defense spending in 2004 (according to North Korean official announcements) accounted for 15.5 percent of the total state budget,[106] an increase of 0.1 percentage points over 2003. Defense expenditures actually spent increased from a 14

percent level until 2002 to 15.7 percent in 2003, reaching a 15 percent level for the first time. (See Figure 18.) The trend indicates that North Korea has been building up arms as tension persists on the Korean peninsula since the outbreak of the North Korean nuclear issue. The actual amount of defense spending cannot be known because North Korea does not disclose actual amounts when it discusses budget plans.

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Share of budget	14.5%	14.5%	14.5%	14.4%	15.4%	15.5%
Amounts spent	14.5%	14.3%	14.4%	14.9%	15.7%	—

Figure 18. Trend of Changes in North Korean Defense Budget Shares.[107]

Many within the North Korean leadership apparently feel that the country now stands at a crossroads where it has to decide whether to continue to compile a wartime budget or shift to a peacetime budget. Prime Minister Pak Pong Chu has pushed for limited market reforms, as well as some engagement with the outside world. To many, the military-first policy has proven an economic disaster, inhibiting the reduction of sanctions and South Korean and Chinese assistance, which are critical to the country's survival.[108] The military elite (or at least the harder-line elements within the high command), fearing a loss of status and the control it won from the KWP in the late 1990s, allegedly has moved to block the country's early ventures into capitalism.

In 2005, the KWP apparently floated a plan designed to readdress the economic imbalance caused by a policy of favoring the military almost to the exclusion of every other sector, which the military immediately challenged. The plan allegedly was tied to Kim's "new thinking" on the economy. In the months leading up to the meeting, Kim had given indications that he supported a readjustment to the budget, focusing on agricultural development.[109] The tension within the system over this issue came to a head in March at a scheduled meeting of the Supreme People's Assembly, which allegedly was called off following increased friction between the KPA and KWP

over the upcoming budget. Such a shift in strategy, hardliners feared, would have necessitated a return to the six-party talks in order to continue bargaining for economic support in return for not developing a nuclear capability. It could have conceivably led in time to the renunciation of nuclear weapons, which would have brought the 10-year military-first policy to an end.[110]

Legitimacy of Reforms.

Some experts believe that the momentum of North Korea's economic reform is irreversible. Reading between the lines of statements coming out of Pyongyang, it appears that Kim Jong Il in 2004-05 began to push for a change.[111] Several factors apparently have given rise to his new thinking at this time.

- The backwardness of industry and inefficiency of the system can no longer sustain the existing mode of economic operation.
- In order to take advantage of inter-Korean projects, such as the construction of Kaesong industrial estate and the relinking of the cross-border Seoul-Shinuiju railway line, the new thinking sought to reinforce the ideological discipline and the operation of the system.
- The Chinese model of socialist development (i.e., maintaining a political system centered on the Communist Party, while pursuing a market economy framework) has generated new expectations and inducement to emulation.[112]

During his recent trip to China (January 10-18, 2006), Kim spent a lot of time inspecting Wuhan, Yichang, Guangzhou, Zhuhai, Shenzhen, and other places.[113] He personally visited China's special economic zones. During his meeting with Chinese leaders, Kim pointed out that North Korea attached great importance to developing the economy. He expressed a willingness to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation with China to explore ways for development in line with the national situation of his country. He noted, "During the course of our visit, we saw the brilliant achievements of China's southern cities, especially the special economic zones, in all fields. . . . This fully proves that China's policy of reforms and opening up is correct."[114]

South Korean officials point out that North Korean economic policy normally is impacted following Kim's trips to China. They, however, debate the lasting effects of resulting changes in guidance. One noteworthy point is that the changes in the North Koreans'awareness at present are occurring faster than the changes in the economic structure. To date, it is difficult to assess either their degree of actual implementation or their impact. Despite "signs of accrued economic activity," a recent report noted, "there seems to be an emerging class of disadvantaged urban population, faced with growing unemployment due to the closing of factories and reduced opportunities for alternative employment."[115]

If his intentions are sincere about accomplishing macro-economic reform, Kim cannot put off forever his choice between a military-first policy and a viable North Korean economy. Whichever direction he goes, it means risky choices in terms of regime survival. It also means that Kim must be secure in his leadership in order to take on entrenched barons, both political and military, within the leadership.

CONCLUSION

Over the last decade since Kim Il Sung's death, Kim Jong Il's alliance with the military has been a key buttress to his rule. The KPA has been converted into a political tool of the regime and has made a great contribution to the longevity of the Kim Jong Il regime by eliminating any apparent opposition and laying the foundation for the upcoming dynastic succession. As a result, the new Great Leader has been able to exert control over Pyongyang politics, while enjoying a high degree of political control.

Kim Jong Il's "military-based" rule, however, does not come without potential consequences. While the KPA currently appears to be unquestionably loyal to Kim Jong Il, considering him to be the only leader capable of governing the nation in these difficult times, it is not inconceivable that it could turn against him, depending on circumstances. Owing to Kim's divide-and-rule tactics, the Army-Party rivalry is likely to be intensified, and bitter competition among the military leaders already is apparent. If the delicate balance begins

to erode, regime stability could be threatened. The KPA's preference for status quo over reform limits the regime's ability to deal with the economic crisis. If allowed to continue, the depletion of the national treasury could throw North Korea into a political-security dilemma, depriving Kim Jong Il of political leverage over the ruling circle.

The intensification of any rivalries in KWP-KPA relations will not be institutional, but personal in nature. Many of the vulnerabilities of the North Korean system reside with the elite. As the North Korean economy has deteriorated under Kim Jong Il, many elites have been forced to compete for privileges and access like never before. Under the military-first policy, KPA-affiliated companies have made rapid inroads into arenas for securing hard currency that were once reserved for the party. This, in turn, has led to increasing weakening of the cohesion of the privileged class. Since the North Korean system is based on "feudal service nobility," where loyalty is ensured through privilege, if the regime loses its ability to placate the elite through goods and services, there is a real chance for the creation of factions.[116] At first these factions, which are really personality-based but will likely reveal themselves as institutionally-based, will compete with each other for the ever-declining privileges. If the situation persists, this factionalism could transform itself into centers of opposition to the regime.

For his own long-term survival, Kim will, if he is able, eventually have to reduce his reliance on the military. How the military reacts will determine not only the character of the future leadership, but also the nature of North Korean security policy. While the evidence of existing warlords within the North Korean system is speculative at best, the possibility for their creation is real.[117] Most likely, they will emerge within Kim Jong Il's inner core of supporters. As Kim Jong Il continues to isolate his power by narrowing the channels of communication and transferring lines of authority between bureaucracies, he is not only causing deep fractures within the leadership, but also bringing the security forces into conflict with each other. These two outcomes have direct consequences for the elite, who see their access to the *Suryong*, and the perks associated with that access, threatened. While Kim Jong Il prefers bureaucratic rivalry as the chief operating principle of his regime over the long term, the conflicts that it engenders could result

in potentially destabilizing antiregime outbursts by demoralized and disenfranchised organizations. This, in turn, could lead to the creation of warlords,[118] who are able to serve as rallying points for the frustrated elements within the elite.

ENDNOTES

1. See author's paper, *North Korean Leadership: Evolving Regime Dynamics in the Kim Jong Il Era*, Alexandria, VA: CNA Corporation, 2003.

2. Kang Sang Chun (66), who oversees Kim Jong Il's protocol and security, was arrested by Chinese police in January 2006 for illegally transferring real estate ownership in Macau. The timing of the arrest was interesting since it occurred close to the time of Kim Jong Il's trip to China. Kang was later released.

3. The term *son'gun chongch'i* first appeared in *Rodong Sinmun* editorials in June-August 1998, preceding the launch of a Taepodong missile across Japan and Kim Jong Il's official succession to power later the same year.

4. One explanation is Kim's suspicions of senior KWP cadres of his father's generation, who are less responsive to his command than younger KPA officers. He knows from history that Kim Il Sung took one decade of KWP factional struggles to reach the summit. The unified and loyal military is seen by the *suryong* as a quicker conduit to power and as a fixer of the moribund economy.

5. By the late 1990s, Kim Jong Il's reliance on the military as a key pillar in the maintenance of his regime was unquestionable, made clear by the military's significant rise in status vis-à-vis the Party. Military leaders, who in the past had been overshadowed by the party cadres, began to rise within the Pyongyang power structure. For example, vice marshals, who used to be ranked on VIP lists beginning around 30 (or even 50), by the late 1990s were placed just below Politburo members but above Party Central Committee secretaries and cabinet ministers.

6. The information used to construct Figure 2 is provided by the Ministry of National Unification, which tracks Kim Jong Il's movements.

7. "DPRK: Kim Jong Il Appearances," compiled by the *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS).

8. The names in bold denote those members of the leadership who are either uniformed military or are members of the NDC. The judgments about political orientation are based on the author's discussions with Lim Chae Hyoung, a research fellow at the Dankook Center for Dispute Resolution and the secretary general of the Korean Political Science Association. He writes widely on North Korean foreign policy issues and is one of the few scholars to attempt to ascribe political leanings to members of the North Korean leadership.

9. Figure 3 comes from the ROK Unification Ministry analysis of DPRK Leader's Activities in 2005, January 23, 2006.

10. Yoel Sano, "Military Holds the Key," *Asia Times Online*, February 18, 2005.

11. Ken Gause, "Leadership Politics in North Korea," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, November 1994.

12. These carrots and sticks were first outlined in Jei Guk Jeon, "Kim Jong Il's Ride on the Tiger KPA: A Two Pronged Strategy Toward the Military," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Summer 1999.

13. EIU, *Country Report: North Korea 4th Quarter 1997*, p. 37; Lee Ki Taek, "The Army and Authoritative Rule in North Korea," *Vantage Point*, Vol. 21, February 1998.

14. *Rodong Shinmun*, April 10, 1997.

15. *Russia DPRK Report*, May/June 1996; *Vantage Point*, Vol. 21, August 1998. Consistent with the strong influence of the military in the North Korean leadership, the list of the representatives to the 10th term of the SPA includes 75 higher military leaders with ranks at or above lieutenant general (two-star).

16. According to many observers, the KWP increasingly has been marginalized in court politics.

17. Jei Guk Jeon, a freelance scholar in Seoul, has written the most insightful studies of the generational challenge Kim Jong Il faces and how he has tried to deal with it. His two major works are "The Politics of Mourning Ritual in North Korea, 1994-1997," *World Affairs*, Winter 2000; and "North Korean Leadership: Kim Jong Il's Intergenerational Balancing Act," *The Strategic Forum*, No. 152, December 1998.

18. In the KPA, all decisions regarding vice marshal and marshal are the responsibility of the NDC and (most likely) the CMC. Appointments to these bodies, of course, also would fall under their control. Kim Jong Il makes all other general grade appointments in his capacity as the Supreme Commander.

19. *Sin Tong a*, June 1993, pp. 452-461.

20. In his speech marking the 60th anniversary of the KPA, Choe did not highlight Kim Jong Il and, as a result, was regarded by the leader as a member of the anti-Kim Jong Il faction within the military. But in his April 1993 speech commemorating the 61st anniversary, he pledged his loyalty to the Dear Leader. Two months earlier, Kim Kwang-chin had delivered a speech marking the 30th anniversary of Kim Il Sung's military slogan "One-a-match-for-100" in which he stated that the "leadership system of the respected Supreme Commander Comrade Kim Jong Il has been firmly established within our People's Army, and the entire Army is firmly and single-heartedly rallied behind him."

21. Jei Guk Jeon, "North Korean Leadership."

22. Ken Gause, "Leadership Politics in North Korea," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, November 1994.

23. Ken Gause, *The North Korean Leadership: Evolving Regime Dynamics in the Kim Jong Il Era*, Alexandria, VA: CNA Corporation, 2003.

24. Pak's communication channel to Kim Jong Il goes around his immediate superior in the GPB, Yi Pong Won.

25. Joseph Bermudez, *The Armed Forces of North Korea*, London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2001, p. 40. It also is rumored that the Operations Bureau may serve as an information facilitating body for NDC directives to the KPA, a relationship similar to the one that existed between the Soviet General Staff's Operation Directorate and the Defense Council.

26. Chang Song U is the older brother of Chang Song-taek, Kim Chong-il's brother-in-law.

27. Yi's relationship with Chang dates back to at least the early 1990s when Yi was commander of the 5th Corps.

28. Hyon's post was taken by another Kim protégé, General Kim Ki-son.

29. He was named a member of the Central Committee in 1993 and promoted to the rank of General in 1995. Apparently, the defection of his nephew, Hyon Sung Il, in 1996 did not do much damage to his influence.

30. Hyon Chul Hae apparently works closely with General Pak Chae Kyong in this role. Both were instrumental in assisting Kim Jong Il in the consolidation of his control over the military.

31. Chung Chang-hyun, *Kim Jong Il Up Close and Personal*, Seoul: Toji Publications, 1999, p. 224.

32. For a detailed examination of the North Korean high command, see author's article "North Korean Military: Status Over Substance," *SP Military Yearbook*, 2002, pp. 19-35.

33. "Activities of DPRK VMAR Cho Myong Nok Assessed," *Seoul Yonhap*, Internet Version, September 29, 2000.

34. For an assessment of the North Korean Navy's standing within the political apparatus, see author's article, "North Korean Navy Grows in Influence," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 2002, pp. 41-43.

35. Kim Chong-min, "Kim Jong Il's New Ruling Structure and Its Real Power Holders," *Seoul Pukhan*, October 1998, pp. 60-77.

36. In 1995 there was an attempted coup by elements of the Sixth Army Corps in North Hamgyong province province bordering China, the area worst hit by the famine. Along with elements in the neighboring 7th Army Corps, they allegedly planned to march on Pyongyang.

37. In the past, the Chief of General Staff position has been a final stepping-stone before appointment as MPAF, but this latter position seems to have been diminished somewhat under Kim Jong Il.

38. This disappearance suggests Yi was "revolutionized," but the reason for his banishment from the leadership remains unknown.

39. Yi served as chairman of the State Inspection Commission and Transportation Commission in the late 1980s. Unlike many Asian bureaucracies, including South Korea, where military officers being appointed to key government posts are discharged from military service, in North Korea, there are many cases of free movement between military and non-military posts.

40. It is rumored that Chon Pyong Ho is the head of the Second Economic Committee (SEC), having taken over from Kim Chol Man.

41. Some have suggested that Choe's removal as Minister of Public Security was tied to a purge by Kim Jong Il designed to rid Chang Song-taek's protégés from critical, security-related positions. While this may be the case, Choe apparently remained on the NDC. "New Trends of Political Situation in North Korea," *Hong Kong Kuang Chiao Ching*, January 16, 2005.

42. "DPRK Coverage of State Funeral Suggests Demotion of NDC Member," FBIS Feature, December 9, 2005.

43. "North Korea Starts Official Procedures for Third Generation Power Succession," *Seoul Shindong-A*, September 1, 2005.

44. When a man by the somewhat unusual name of Paek Se Pong was listed as a member of the powerful NDC at the SPA meeting in 2003, North Korea watchers were unable to identify him. A complete unknown, his name did not appear in any database of North Korean officials, sparking speculation that the name was a pseudonym, and that the individual was actually one of Kim Jong Il's sons, who was being groomed to succeed him. The interpretation of the name was that Paek stood for Mt. Paektu; Se was a Korean word for "three;" and Bong was "peak." Thus, the name was believed to mean "The three peaks of Mt. Paektu—Kim Il Song; Kim Jong Il; and his mother, Kim Chong Suk."

45. Pyongyang radio, October 22, 2005; *Rodong Sinmun*, October 23, 2005.

46. Paek is listed below these 16 high-level officials and even after the chairmen of North Korea's two front parties—the Korea Social Democratic Party and the Korea Chondoist Cho'ngu Party—who are never referred to as "comrade." In virtually all media reporting of attendance at official functions, the chairmen of these minor parties seem to mark the cutoff point for the "comrade" grouping. He is listed before the chairman of the Central Control Committee and nine Central Committee department directors or deputy directors—none of whom are consistently referred to as "comrade" in media reporting. His position in the list—grouped together with party Central Committee non-secretary level officials—suggests, however, that he could be a senior official under the Central Committee, possibly the CMC, given his previous identification as a member of the NDC. It should be noted, however, that in the past, there have been officials who have appeared out of sequence in funeral lists only to appear later in their assumed post.

47. "Pyongyang Leadership Resembles General Hospital Ward," *Seoul JeongAng Ilbo*, June 29, 2005.

48. Other major figures not on the NDC, such as Kim Yong Nam (age 77, commissioner of SPA standing committee), Choe Tae Pok (age 75, chairman of the SPA), Yang Hyong Sop (age 80, vice commissioner of the SPA standing committee), Kim Ki Nam (age 79, KWP Secretary and vice commissioner of DPRK's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland), Kim Chung Lin (age 81, KWP Secretary), are within the aging elite.

49. In addition to its functional role, the CMC has a ceremonial role. It sponsors the armed forces day celebrations. Since 1995, the CMC has issued all congratulatory messages to all military events, something the KWP used to do prior to 1995. See Hyeong Jung Park and Kyo Duk Lee, *Continuities and Changes in the Power Structure and the Role of Party Organizations Under Kim Jong Il's Reign*, Studies Series 05-05, Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, May 2005.

50. Some North Korea watchers, however, argue that Kim's weakening of the KWP's functions did not seriously undermine its preponderant position within the regime. They contend that it remains the supreme organization that controls, organizes, and directs various projects in the political, economic, cultural, and military fields. The military-first policy, they argue, "fundamentally aims to ensure the unlimited loyalty of the military to the great tasks of the party." Ko Sang Jin, "Fundamental Characteristics of Great Leader Kim Jong Il's Military-first Politics," *The Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 1, 1999, p. 18. See also Hyeong Jung Park and Kyo Duk Lee.

51. Discussion with U.S. and South Korean sources.

52. This list is based on a reference pamphlet published by the South Korean Ministry of Unification in February 2005. As noted, several of the members have retired from their institutional portfolios, thus making it unclear whether they still hold positions on the CMC.

53. The veracity of these documents is highly suspect. There is a cottage industry that exists along the Chinese-North Korean border that traffics in forged DPRK documents. Whether this industry is tied to a larger North Korean disinformation campaign is not clear. Discussion with ROK and Chinese journalists and former intelligence sources.

54. "Workers Party of Korea [KWP] Central Military Committee Order No. 2—On the Issuance of Regulations for Wartime Operations" (2 pages), with a copy of the "Regulations for Wartime Operations" (31 pages) appended.

55. The CMC forwards military requirements to the KWP Munitions Industry Department, which, in turn, passes them to the Second Economic Committee. At this level, requirements are reviewed and compared with the relevant defense industry's resources and finances. See Kyoung-Soo Kim, North Korea's CB Weapons: Threat and Capability. *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, Spring 2002.

56. In terms of composition, the CMC is better suited to exercise control over the military than the NDC. Traditionally, its membership has includes active duty and retired officers, many of whom are considered the "top brains" of the armed forces.

57. The North Korean ship sunk by the Japanese Coast Guard in December 2001 is believed to have belonged to the Operations Department. All personnel aboard the vessel committed suicide instead of surrendering.

58. O Kuk Yol is the son of O Chung Hup, who died in action while fighting the Japanese with Kim Il Sung in the 1930s. It is reported that he lived with Kim Il Sung's family before entering the Mangyongdae Revolution Institute. He entered the Air Force and was promoted rapidly, becoming commander in 1971, deputy chief of the General Staff in 1977, and chief of the General Staff in 1979. In 1980, his career reached a pinnacle with his election to the Politburo and CMC. In 1988, however, he was dismissed as chief of the General Staff following a power struggle with O Chin U. In 1992, he was identified as director of the KWP Civil Defense Department. A year later, he was identified in his current post.

59. Many speculated that the NDC's administrative affairs were either the responsibility of Kim Jong Il's personal secretariat (as with the Supreme Defense Council under Stalin) or had a dedicated apparatus (as exists in China).

60. According to some South Korean sources, the Military Affairs Department was eliminated as part of a shakeup of the KWP in 2004 to streamline Kim Jong Il's control over the military and reduce the party's interference in military affairs. Kim, they contend, now directs the armed forces through the GPB's chain of command. The shifts in the GPB would seem to support the argument that the KWP's role in military affairs has been reduced. However, in 2005, Hwang Pyong Il, identified as a deputy director of the KWP Military Department, has been a frequent accompanying cadre on Kim's guidance inspections, suggesting that the department still exists. See "New Confidants of Chairman Kim Jong Il Emerge," *Seoul Yonhap*, June 9, 2005.

61. "North Appoints New Reserve Chief," *Seoul JoongAng Ilbo*, February 24, 2005. Chang Song U is a second-generation military leader whose contact with Kim Jong Il dates back to the early 1980s. Chang is the older brother of Chang Song Taek, Kim's brother-in-law. Until Chang Song Taek's fall from power in 2004, Chang Song U enjoyed the trust of the Great Leader. A member of the Central Committee since 1982, Chang was promoted to lieutenant general in 1984. He rose through the security apparatus, first in the Ministry of Public Security and then the General Guards Bureau. He became commander of the 3rd Army Corps in 1994. This corps, which is deployed in Pyongyang, is considered vital for regime security. Chang at times also was identified as director of the Guard Command's Political Bureau, which would involve him in Kim Jong Il's personal security. Chang's transfer from the 3rd Corps to the KWP Civil Defense Department is considered a demotion.

62. The Chinese press in September 2005 reported on President Hu Jintao's meeting with Kim Ik Hyon, who was leading a delegation of Korean anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters participating in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the victory in the world anti-fascist war, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. The report did not mention his status on the CMC.

63. He took care of Kim Il Song's grandparents, Kim Po Hyon and Yi Po Ik.

64. The Guard Command is subordinate organizationally to the MPAF.

65. Yi's influence has been obvious since 1996, when his name (together with vice marshals Cho Myong Nok and Kim Yong Chun) began to appear right below full Politburo members and above associate members in lists of attendees at important functions.

66. "Biographical and Career Data on North Korean VMAR Pak Ki-so," Seoul National Intelligence Service, November 1, 1999.

67. "Pyongyang has Dozens of Nukes, Top Defector Says," AFP, May 14, 2003. Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Kim Jong Il allegedly established an underground command post, which was called about the KPA Supreme Command's Field Command Post. There, he conducted analysis of the war situation together with members of the office of Kim Jong Il's military strategy assistants formally known as the "Operation Team [*chakchonjo*]." Besides Kim Tu-nam, the Operation Team includes Cho Myong Nok; Kim Yong Chun; and Yi Myong Su, director of the General Staff's Operations Department. Another feature of the Operation Team is that it reportedly has on staff specialists with high levels of knowledge on such things as missiles and radars.

68. Kim Il Song initially employed Kim Tu Nam up as his aide-de-camp. "DPRK Defector on Kim Jong Il's Family, Close Aides," *Tokyo Gendai*, August 2, 2003.

69. Other professors who taught military science to Kim Jong Il include VMAR Choe In Tok, President of the Kim Il Song University; Lieutenant General Kim Sun Il, Vice President of the university; and Major General Kim Sang Ho.

70. In 1976, Kim published an article entitled "Scientific Features of Modern War and Factors of Victory," which reexamined and reinterpreted North Korean military doctrine. He focused at length on the importance of economic development and the impact of new weapons on military strategy. He argued that the quality of arms and the level of military technology define the characteristics of war. Kim's article contains several concepts that continue to influence North Korean operational art; particularly influential are the concepts that emphasize the importance of operational and tactical mobility through the employment of mechanized forces, the importance of firepower throughout the depth of the battlefield, the importance of deep strikes, and the importance of command and control. Kim also stresses that each operational plan and campaign should aim at a lightning war for a quick decision. See *globalsecurity.org* for more information on North Korean military doctrine.

71. The SEC is responsible for the defense industry. It is commanded and controlled by the KWP CMC and the Central Committee's Munitions Industry Department. Originally placed under the party Central Committee, the SEC was placed under the NDC in 1993, when Kim Jong Il was appointed its chairman and the commission's status and role were elevated. Although the South Korean media have long referred to North Korea's "Second Economic Committee," the term has

not been observed in DPRK media, *Joongang Ilbo*, May 22, 1995. Nor are any of the subordinate units of the SEC mentioned in the North Korean media.

72. Kim Chol Man may have taken over the Agriculture portfolio from So Kwan Hui, who died.

73. Because his father was a close subordinate of Kim Il Song during the days of anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle, he enjoyed Kim Il Song's confidence and also was highly trusted by O Chin U.

74. Based on a discussion with North Korean defector. When O Kuk Yol, a confidant of Kim Jong Il who was then serving as chief of the General Staff, attempted to wipe out political officers within the military circles in the late 1980s, Yi Pong Won reported the irregularities of approximately 10 generals, including O, to Kim Il Song and set off a purge of the high command. This apparently caused resentment on the part of Kim Jong Il and O Kuk Yol toward Yi, which may have contributed to the rumors of his demise.

75. "15 Powerful Figures in the Kim Jong Il Regime," *Seoul Sindong-A*, September 1998. Yi Pong Won remains on the FBIS CMC list, but has been taken off of the latest list provided by the ROK National Intelligence Service.

76. Before he was appointed as director of the Artillery Guidance Bureau in 1988, Choe Sang-Uk held the position of commander of the KPA Artillery Command, 1985-88.

77. At the time of the regime's founding in September 1948, North Korea called the Office of Military Forces the "People's Defense Ministry." It was renamed the Ministry of People's Armed Forces in a sweeping power structure reorganization, featuring the creation of the state presidency made at the first meeting of the Fifth SPA in December 1972. The MPAF was separated from the Administration Council and put under the CPC in April 1982. The Ministry was again placed under the NDC in May 1990 when the Commission was expanded.

78. In order that no high-ranking military officer can conspire with another to topple Kim Jong Il, the present structure forces each one to stand-alone and each be ultimately responsible to the supreme commander.

79. There are reports that this post is now vacant and essentially is overseen by Kim Jong Il himself. This is similar to the situation that exists with the KWP's Organization and Guidance Department.

80. Kim has been referred to in the North Korean press as a vice minister of the MPAF and chief of the Engineering Bureau of the General Staff. See "ROK's Yonhap Analyzes DPRK's Recent Promotion of Military Officials," *Seoul Yonhap*, July 27, 2003; "DPRK Learning From Vietnam's Reform, Opening Up Through Expanding Ties," *Seoul Yonhap*, December 3, 2003.

81. It is not clear whether Pak Yun Hwal still holds this portfolio. The most recent references to him in the North Korean press are to the unit named after him, which is involved in construction projects. This could suggest that he has

retired. See "DPRK, PRC Units Involved in Construction of Taean Friendship Glass Factory," *North Korea and China*, FBIS Report in English, October 7, 2005.

82. This listing is based on discussions with various North Korea watchers and the *North Korea Directory*, Radiopress, Inc, Kanagawa, Japan, 2004.

83. See "DPRK Media Coverage of State Funeral Suggests Demotion of NDC Member," *North Korea*, OSC Analysis in English, December 8, 2005. See also *North Korea Directory*, Japan: Radio Press, 2004.

84. Joseph Bermudez, *Shield of the Great Leader*, p. 59.

85. This map is adapted from one that appeared in *Seoul Wolgan Chungang*, November 1, 2000. All boundaries and corps locations are approximate.

86. Seven of nine infantry corps commanders, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, and Wonson Corps, as well as some mechanized and artillery corps, were changed. Almost all of the brigade-level commanders were replaced by people in their 30s. This reshuffle has received little attention in the press. I have received the names of most of the new appointees, but have not been able to corroborate the information. For that reason, I have chosen not to publish the names.

87. Occasionally, a corps commander rises to vice marshal rank, as in the cases of Chon Chae Son (First Corps) and Chang Song U (Third Corps).

88. Often corps commanders are not identified until Kim Jong Il visits their unit, and in many cases, not even then.

89. In the *Military Balance 2006*, the International Institute for Strategic Studies reported that the DPRK's submarine warfare capacity has increased dramatically, and the number of its troops under arms has been reduced. The institute said the changes in the DPRK's military machine suggested that Pyongyang was focusing on doing the maximum possible damage to the infrastructure of the ROK in case of war, rather than maintaining a large coterie of under-equipped ground troops.

90. For an examination of this purge, see author's chapter in *North Korean Policy Elites*, Institute for Defense Analyses, 2004.

91. There are rumors that the Guard Command recently may have been restructured and designated the Guard Bureau or the General Guard Bureau. One source states that this occurred in 2000. "Implicit Conflict," *Seoul Pukhan Yojigyong*, June 1, 2006, pp. 214-218.

92. According to some sources, Kim Jong Il began to place more emphasis on the Guard Command following the execution of Romanian President Ceausescu in 1990.

93. Security for Kim Jong Il originally was handled by the State Defense Department. However, beginning in 1976, this activity was taken over by the Guard General Bureau. After Kim Il Song's death, the Guard General Bureau was reorganized into the Guard Command.

94. The only other name mentioned as a possible successor to Yi Ul Sol is his long-time chief of staff, Colonel General Yun Chong In.

95. Kim Sung Bom's time in grade as a lieutenant general is considered by many experts on North Korean military promotional patterns to be shorter than normal.

96. The extent of the relationship of these two security forces was highlighted in reporting in 2005. South Korea's *JoongAng Ilbo* reported that "thousands of soldiers" from the "Pyongyang Defense Command and Third Army Corps" had been mobilized to kill and bury infected chickens around Pyongyang, March 31, 2005.

97. It should be noted that Pak Ki So has not disappeared from public view. In April 2005, he sat in the front row of the 73rd KPA Founding Anniversary Report Meeting. See "Panoramic View of DPRK Leaders at 73rd KPA Founding Anniversary Report Meeting," Pyongyang Korean Central Television via Satellite in Korean 0602 GMT, April 24, 2005, cited in FBIS.

98. The Security Command technically holds equal organizational status with the General Staff and the GPB. However, the command's status and the close relationship between its commander, General Won Ung Hui, and Kim Jong Il apparently allows it to operate autonomously from the MPAF.

99. Kim Jong Il allegedly entrusted the KPA with both the investigation and purge because, in his words, "the State Security Department and the Ministry of Public Security are in collusion with the corrupted forces." *Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, January 1999.

100. In 2005, North Korea placed a block on foreign trade organizations and companies operating there from making international phone calls after news of a bird flu outbreak spread rapidly to the outside world, presumably through phone lines. "North Korea Limits International Phone Services After Bird Flu Outbreak," *Seoul Yonhap*, May 13, 2005.

101. According to some sources, the former commander of the General Guards Bureau, Yi Ul Sol, is close to Kim Chong Nam and "treats him like a grandson."

102. According to recent reports, Kim Jong Il has since remarried Kim Ok Hui, one of his secretaries.

103. In a recent article, Brent Choi of *Joongang Ilbo* makes a wise argument that speculation on the succession struggle often has proved wrong, based on less than reputable documents and spurious logic. There is an almost unanimous assumption in the media, and among many Pyongyang watchers, that Kim's successor will be one of his sons. While this is a strong possibility, it is not beyond reason that another powerful figure could emerge to take the reins of power, especially if something were to happen to Kim in the near term or if the succession does not occur for years, giving time for major shifts in the structural dynamics within the regime. See "Looking for Mr. X: North Korea's Successor," presented on the Nautilus website, January 10, 2006.

104. Until Chang's purge, Hwang Chang Yop believed Chang Song Taek was the most likely successor if Kim Jong Il were to become ill or step down in the

near term. Chang also could serve as the power behind the throne if one of Ko Yong Hui's young sons (approximately 22 and 20) was chosen. A rumor in early 2004 posited the possibility of a nephew, the son of Kim Kyong Hui and Chang Song Taek, succeeding Kim. An excellent examination of the various contenders is provided by Yoel Sano, "Happy Birthday, Dear Leader—Who's Next in Line?" *Asia Times*, February 14, 2004.

105. As noted earlier, VMAR Chang Song U has been identified as the commander of the Civil Defense Command, a key post within the regime, but not as critical as the Third Corps, which serves a Praetorian Guard function. Lieutenant General Chang Song Kil has not been mentioned in the press since 1988, when he accompanied Kim Jong Il to a performance of the 488th Great Command Unit's art propaganda troupe. His death was announced in July 2006. At that time, it was revealed he most recently had occupied the post of curator of the Revolutionary Museum of the Armed Forces. This post traditionally has been reserved for senior military officers who are no longer able to perform their duties for health reasons. "Chang Song Kil Dies. Death Likely Due to Illness," *The Daily NK*, July 12, 2006.

106. Other calculations of how much North Korea spends on its military varies from these figures based on different calculations. For example, *Military Balance 2004-2005* by the UK's International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) estimated that North Korea's military expenditure in 2004 was approximately $5.5 billion, or 25 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). To put this in perspective, the ROK's defense budget was $14.6 billion in 2004. Taking into consideration that the size of North Korea's economy is less than 1/30th of the ROK's economy, it can be seen how important military power is to North Korea.

107. "Gradual Increase in DPRK's Defense Budget," *Seoul Yonhap*, March 25, 2004. Figure 18 is based on North Korean figures. However, taking into consideration the characteristics of the North Korean system and its budgetary system, ROK budget analysts believe that North Korea's actual military spending is over 30 percent of its GNP. In other words, in addition to state budget, North Korea's defense budget is augmented by the independent military budget system through the military supply economic operation system, the second economy, the export of weapons, and the military units that earn foreign currencies; and it is believed that North Korea has an extremely low-cost military spending structure with the defense industrial plants that are owned by the state. See *ROK Defense Whitepaper 2004*.

108. Dick Nanto provides some sobering figures. About 40 percent of the population still suffers from malnutrition, including 30 percent of the children. See his chapter in Young Whan Kihl and Hong Nack Kim, eds., *North Korea: The Politics of Regime Survival*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2006.

109. North Korea's current economic policy can be traced back to 2001, with the announcement of "new thinking," which was followed by the "1 July economic management improvement measures" in 2002. Following the guidance laid down in these measures, North Korea embarked on enacting new laws or revising the

existing laws for economic reform and put forth the "military-first era's economic construction line" (a line of simultaneously developing light industry and agriculture with priority given to defense industry) in September 2002 as a new economic operation policy. So, while Kim has tried to readjust priorities, he has done it within the Military-first Policy.

110. According to one theory, Kim decided to declare the existence of North Korea's nuclear weapons to counter the military's security arguments. The military had been arguing: "Why does North Korea have to take a conciliatory stance by suggesting the possibility of abandoning nuclear weapons when the United States keeps its hostile policy toward North Korea unchanged? The regime is still beset with instability because of that, which makes it all the more necessary for the military to take action." Therefore, North Korea needed to declare its possession of nuclear weapons in terms of saying that it could handle its own security without having to make a compromise to the United States to pacify the military before instituting a shift away from the military-first policy. No matter what the reason, the declaration on nuclear weapons has inhibited the reform effort, if for no other reason than it makes it harder to establish market systems with ties to the outside world.

111. It is important to note that many analysts, especially North Korean defectors, point to Kim Jong Il as the largest impediment to reform. They note that he has become disengaged and unable to make clear policy choices. Reformers within the system, they contend, often have "disappeared" after pushing policy changes.

112. These reasons for Kim Jong Il's new thinking were first posited by Yu Ho Yol, "Change in N. Korea needs scrutiny," *The Dong-a Ilbo*, January 17, 2001.

113. Unlike in previous visits to China, Kim's entourage was composed almost entirely of economic officials, such as DPRK Cabinet Premier Pak Pong Chu; Pak Nam Ki, Chairman of SPA Budget Committee; Yi Kwang Ho, director of KWP S&T Department; and DPRK Vice Cabinet Premier Ro Tu Chol. If there were any military officials as part of the entourage, they were not identified publicly.

114. Quote from "North Korea: Will Economic Reform Defuse the Nuclear Crisis?" *Beijing Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan*, January 30, 2005.

115. The UNICEF Humanitarian Action Report 2006.

116. Cracks have at time been rumored to exist within Kim Jong Il's core constituency. In the late 1990s, such stalwart supporters as Kim Kuk Tae, Kim Ki Nam, and Kim Yong Sun were rumored to be frustrated by lack of influence and access, when Kim Jong Il tended not to accept policy proposals they made. Nothing much seemed to materialize from this discontent. However, it did reveal that as the system came under increasing economic and political pressure, cracks could even appear within Kim Jong Il's inner sanctum.

117. Kim Il Song carried out five purges of the North Korean military. While he was able to rid the system of warlords, he did not cut deep to eradicate their patronage systems. In fact, today colleagues or descendants of these vanished

warlords exist within the high command. Cho Myong Nok, Yi Tu Ik, Choe In Tok, Kim Ik Hyon, Chon Chin Su, Yi Pyong Uk, Kim Yong Yon, and Chon Chae Son were protégés of one or another warlords; while Kim Il Chol, Kim Yong Chun, Yi Yong Mu, Pak Chae Kyong, Hyon Chol Hae, Won Ung Hui, Kim Myong Kuk, Yi Myong Su, O Kuk Yol, Kim Tae Sik, O Yong Pang, Kim Ha Kyu, Chang Pong Chun, Yi Chong San, Pak Ki So, Kim Kyok Sik, Yi Yong Hwan, and Chu Sang Song are their descendants. Kim Chong Min, "Kim Chong-il's New Ruling Structure and Its Real Power Holders," *Seoul Pukhan,* October 1998, pp. 60-77.

118. Warlords, in this context, refers to individual leaders, who have sources of power, independent of Kim Jong Il's largess or manipulation, including alliances within the security and military apparatuses.